

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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INSIDE



Shirley's Expands

With its growing number of loyal patrons, Shirley's Coffee Shop is now working on the opening of a new and bigger branch in Susupe to accommodate more guests for the restaurant known for its fried rice.

Page 14



Al-Sadr Accepts

Radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr accepted a peace plan Wednesday that would disarm his militia and remove them from their hideout in a revered shrine, raising hopes of resolving a crisis threatened to undermine the fledgling interim government.

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Crazy Brides

Bridezilla (brid zil/a) n. a bride who is greedy, thoughtless and rude, thinks nothing of etiquette and believes her friends and family should cater to all of her desires, no matter how outrageous.

Page 35



LIBERTY DONES

SAFETY LEADERS

Public Safety commissioner Ed Camacho, center, and Boating Safety Division chief Pete Muna, fourth from left, pose with department personnel shortly after Thursday's proclamation signing declaring Aug. 23 to 29 as Boating Safety Week at the Governor's Office.

Sugar Dock closed down

Drownings prompt dock's closure to swimming

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Recreational activities at Sugar Dock such as swimming are currently prohibited following recent incidents of drowning and pending assessment of the area for possible development.

Public Safety commissioner Ed Camacho said during yesterday's proclamation signing for Boating Safety Week that only certain areas—the hotel areas—can be allowed for use.

"It's off-limit for swimming because we're also paying the price. We're looking at proposals to see how we can change such condition," said Camacho.

He said recreational activities could be done at commercial areas such as Grand Hotel and Pacific Gardenia where there are more people to monitor activities, including lifeguards from these establishments.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta instructed the Boating Safety Division yesterday to closely monitor the Sugar Dock, which

has already claimed five lives this year.

"A lot of people who drowned there are actually swimmers. So Captain [Pete Muna], take a look at the area. I see it as a very dangerous area. The current is very treacherous. We just lost another life two days ago," he said, referring to a man who died while snorkeling with his son beyond the reefline across Sugar Dock. The boy, about 10 years old, survived by

See SUGAR on Page 12

NMC gets, then loses proposed budget

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College was an inch away from getting a much needed \$350,000 budget allocation—the amount it says it desperately needs to survive up to December this year—when two minority congressmen raised concerns on

its legality during yesterday's session.

House Bill 14-187, an appropriation bill that was revised to include a \$350,000 allocation for NMC from the Tobacco Control Fund, was up for passage yesterday when Saipan Rep. Arnold Palacios expressed his concern about the "substantial funding" that the Legislature is extending NMC.

"I have great concern in funding NMC. I'm not opposing to funding the college *per se*, but I have a problem with the substantial funding we've been giving to NMC," he said.

He noted that the Legislature had just authorized the governor to reprogram \$300,000 from the Tobacco Control

See NMC on Page 12

BoG opinion backs MPLA's Castro in dispute with Hofschneider

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Only the Marianas Public Lands Authority can approve and alter the amounts to be paid to land claimants, Bank of Guam's bond counsel said.

Bond counsel Roger Davis issued this legal opinion in view of the controversy involving MPLA commissioner Henry Hofschneider's decision to allow the Commonwealth Development Authority

See BOG on Page 12

The disbursement process for land claimant payments:

- The MPLA board of directors will negotiate with land claimants on the desired and approved compensation amount.
- The MPLA commissioner will sign and forward the approval and schedule of payments to the Secretary of Finance.
- The Finance Secretary will concur and forward the documents to CDA.
- CDA will forward the required documents to the trustee, which is Bank of Guam.
- The trustee will request the redemption of funds and execute the release of funds via a check to the individuals listed on the payment schedule on the following business day.
- The checks will be delivered to MPLA for distribution to the land claimants.

'Storm conditions possible Sunday'

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Less than two months after the onslaught of Typhoon Tingting, the Emergency Management Office warned the public that tropical storm conditions could be felt on the islands by Sunday.

In a special advisory, however, the EMO said the weather disturbance was still difficult to predict, as the storm's development was still at its early stages yesterday.

The EMO said tropical depression 19W was located about 1,060 miles east of Saipan, about 1,065 miles east

See STORM on Page 12



Local

CARS UNLIMITED

diabetes
+GREEN

LOTTERY

Island Snapshots

The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed pictures of birthdays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Must include a caption containing complete details (a description of the event, identities of the persons in the picture, the date, and the place), the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the size of the picture. Contributors can e-mail their submissions to editor.tribune@gtepacific.net. To check if contributions are received, call 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747.

Training on new labor rules taking time

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Citing time constraints, a ranking Department of Labor official said yesterday that the training of the department’s employees on the new alien labor rules and regulations is grinding along slowly.

Dean Tenorio, director of the Division of Labor, said the department has been trying to educate all its employees on the many changes to the alien labor policy but the training sessions could not be conducted frequently enough, as the department personnel still have to attend to their regular work.

“This is a major shift in our policy, and training is very important. But it can’t be done immediately, because the employees are very busy and they work eight hours a day,” Tenorio said.

Nevertheless, he added that he tries to stay until 6pm, so he could discuss the new procedures with the staff after work hours. “We also try to do some training during weekends,” he said.

Tenorio, assistant attorney

general James Livingstone, and Employment Services director Alfred Pangelinan were the guest speakers at yesterday’s special meeting of the Society of Human Resource Management.

In an interview, Tenorio said the provision in the new regulations allowing guest workers to engage in multiple employment appears to draw the greatest interest from employers.

One of the most frequently asked questions, he noted, related to the liability that each employer has over medical expenses resulting from the injury of an alien worker with two jobs.

The Labor Department encourages the primary and secondary employers to make an arrangement on how they would split medical expenses based on the number of hours that an employee works for each employer.

“Right now, an employer has 100 percent liability. With multiple employment, they would have someone to share the liability with,” Tenorio said.

He also stressed that employers are given a lot of discretion whether or not to allow their

worker to engage in a second job. Employers providing their workers at least 40 hours of work per week may cite scheduling conflict, protection of trade secrets and productivity

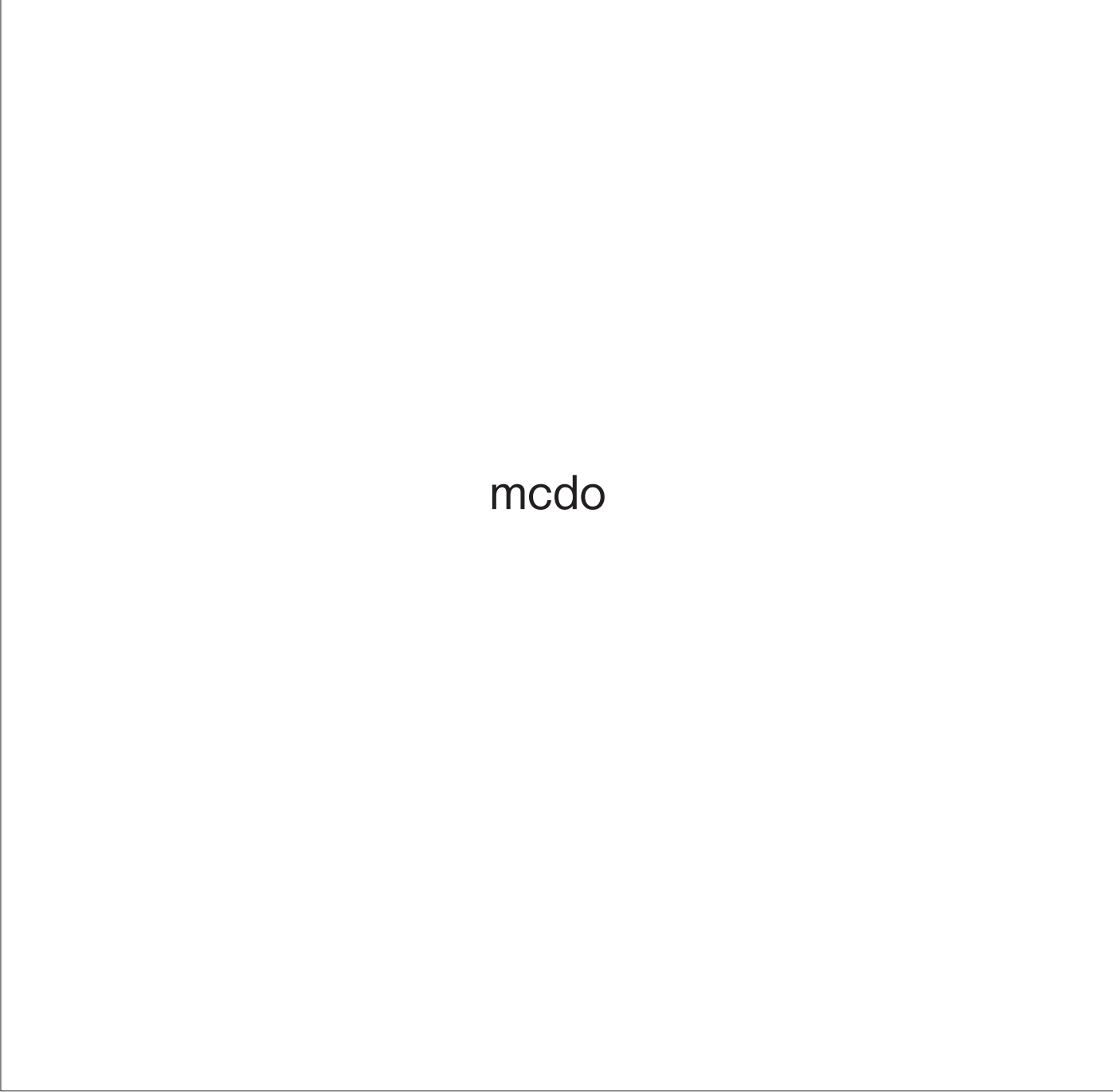
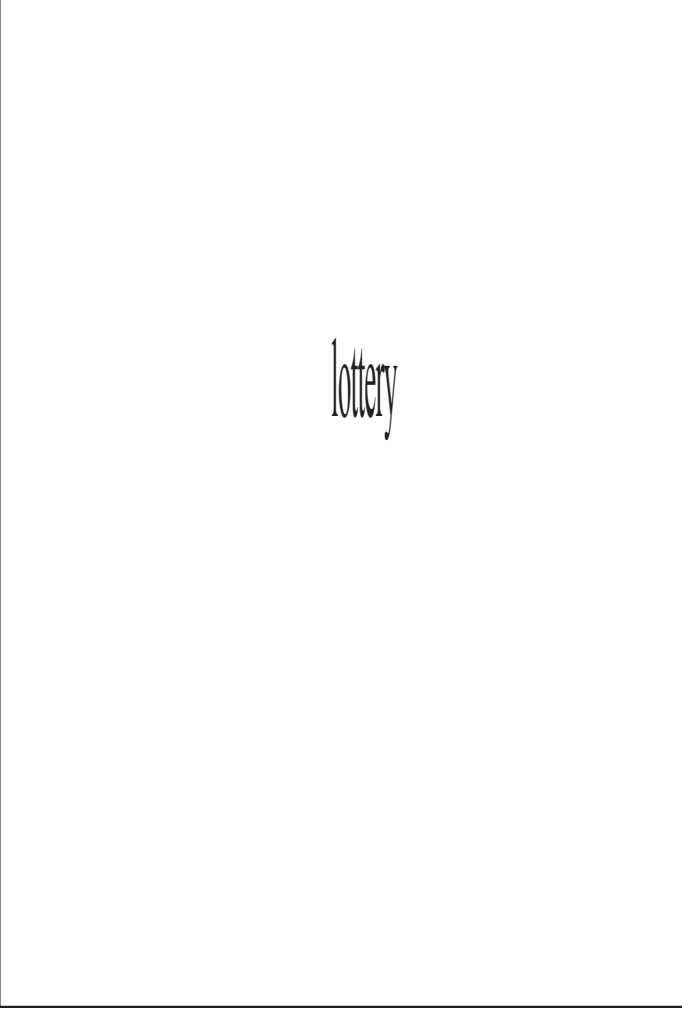
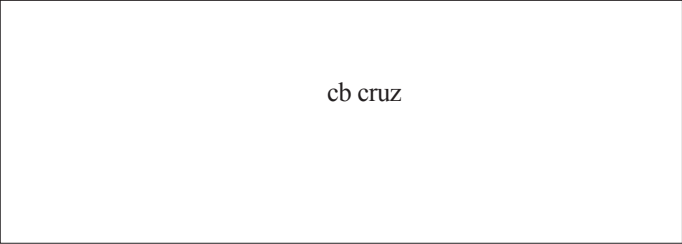
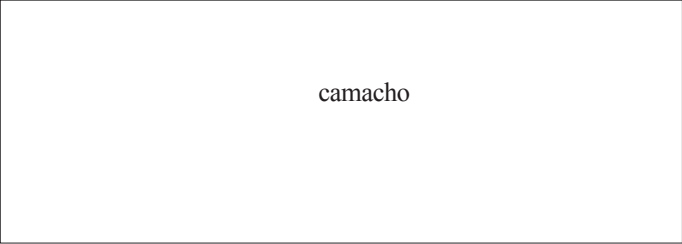
issues as valid reasons to disallow an employee from seeking secondary employment.

Further, Tenorio said the Division of Labor has not received any applications for second jobs

since the new rules were implemented two weeks ago.

“The job vacancy announcement requirement is probably one reason. Also, this is such a new concept. I guess nobody




















wants to be the first to rush in the door. People thought there would be a flood of applications, but it’s not going to happen if the employers don’t allow it,” he said.



Please meet the schools' nutritionists and food caterers on Tuesday, Aug. 17, at 3pm. The location is Northern Marianas College CREES in Building F. Call 287-0561 or 234-5498 Ext. 1709.

Freedom Air Flight Schedule				
Flight	City	Day	Frequency	
Domestic Routes				
FR100	2:00am	8:00am	Daily	
International Routes				
FR101	4:00am	8:00am	Daily	
Regional Routes				
FR102	6:00am	10:00am	Daily	
Long-haul Routes				
FR103	8:00am	12:00am	Daily	
Night Services				
FR104	4:00am	4:00pm	Daily	
Special Services				
FR105	4:00pm	8:00pm	Daily	
Cargo Services				
FR106	6:00am	8:00pm	Daily	
Charter Services				
FR107	6:00am	7:00pm	Daily	
Seasonal Routes				
FR108	8:00am	8:00am	Daily	
FR109	1:00pm	7:00pm	Daily	
FR110	2:00pm	8:00pm	Daily	
FR111	3:00pm	9:00pm	Daily	
FR112	4:00pm	10:00pm	Daily	
FR113	5:00pm	11:00pm	Daily	
FR114	6:00pm	12:00am	Daily	
FR115	7:00pm	1:00am	Daily	
FR116	8:00pm	2:00am	Daily	
FR117	9:00pm	3:00am	Daily	
FR118	10:00pm	4:00am	Daily	
FR119	11:00pm	5:00am	Daily	
FR120	12:00am	6:00am	Daily	

Winds: Southeast at 5-10 kt.
Highs 84. Lows 73.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Partly Cloudy	50F (10C)	37F (3C)
 Beijing	Partly Cloudy	76F (24C)	62F (17C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	78F (26C)
 Honolulu	Sunny	90F (32C)	76F (24C)
 London, England	Showers	69F (21C)	54F (12C)
 Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	85F (29C)	64F (18C)
 Manila	Thunder	87F (31C)	71F (22C)
 Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	54F (12C)	40F (4C)
 Miami	Thunder	90F (32C)	79F (26C)
 New York City	Sunny	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	79F (26C)	67F (19C)
 Paris	Thunder	72F (22C)	51F (11C)
 Pusan	Showers	82F (28C)	71F (22C)
 Rome	Sunny	85F (29C)	66F (19C)
 Salem, Oregon	Sunny	89F (32C)	59F (15C)
 San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	57F (14C)
 Seoul	Thunder	84F (33C)	64F (18C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	83F (28C)	69F (21C)
 Washington, DC	Sunny	86F (30C)	68F (20C)

Prosecutors given Sept. deadline in Stanley suit

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Government prosecutors have until Sept. 1 to include the name of attorney general Pamela Brown in the documents charging ex-congressman Stanley Torres of conspiring with two others in a ghost employee scheme.

Superior Court judge Juan T. Lizama gave deputy attorney general Clyde Lemons Jr. and chief prosecutor David Hutton the deadline to comply with his May 25 ruling that directed the prosecutors to amend the charging documents.

Lizama ordered the government attorneys to appear before his courtroom on Sept. 2 to inform the court as to whether or not they complied with the deadline.

“If the government has not complied, the court will issue an order to show cause why counsel for the government should not be sanctioned and will grant the government time to prepare a response in writing,” Lizama said.

Lemons and Hutton have refused to comply with the order, even though the Supreme Court junked their petition for a writ that would prohibit the lower court from enforcing the May 25 ruling.

The prosecutors questioned the line of reasoning behind the May 25 ruling, which compelled the amendment of the criminal information even if Lizama ruled that there was no statutory basis to compel the inclusion of the attorney general’s name in the charging documents.

Once Brown’s name appears in the charging documents, defense attorneys may pursue a line of argument questioning

ERRATUM

In yesterday’s article on court proceedings in connection with the lawsuit against ex-congressman Stanley Torres, a certain Dolores Bermudes was erroneously referred to as co-defendant. Torres’ co-defendant is actually Dorothy Sablan, the congressman’s former office manager. Our apologies.

her legitimacy as attorney general. The criminal charges were brought before the court on her authority. Lawmakers opposed to Brown’s confirmation, including Torres, had questioned the validity of the Senate nod to her appointment.

In open court Wednesday, Lizama said he would dismiss the case with finality if the prosecutors fail to comply with the May 25 ruling. A written order by Lizama, however, made no mention about the case’s possible dismissal, except that it threatened the prosecutors of possible sanctions.

During Wednesday’s hearing, Lemons and Hutton said they are both ready to face possible sanctions.

Lemons and Hutton—not Brown—signed the charging documents that accused Torres, his former office manager Dorothy Sablan, and legislative staff Frank Ada of engaging in a fraudulent scheme wherein Sablan received government monies through payroll when she did not actually perform work.

The prosecutors charged Torres with five counts each of misconduct in public office, conspiracy to commit theft, conspiracy to commit theft by deception and illegal use of public supplies, ser-

vices, time and personnel.

They filed against Sablan five counts each of the last three offenses. Additionally, the prosecutors filed five counts each of theft, theft by deception and receiving stolen property against her.

Ada faces four counts each of conspiracy to commit theft and conspiracy to commit theft by deception, and illegal use of public supplies, services, time and personnel.

The criminal information alleged that Sablan received at least \$5,384.67 as salary in 2003 when she was actually off-island. Ada allegedly prepared fraudulent time and attendance sheets indicating that Sablan had rendered work.

Meanwhile, Lizama denied Ada’s request to dismiss the case. Ada had pushed for the case’s dismissal, citing a defendant’s right to speedy trial and a procedural rule that a criminal case could be dismissed if there was unnecessary delay in bringing the defendant to trial. Ada, through his lawyer Edward Arriola, contended that he has yet to be arraigned, even if the charges were filed as early as March 10.

The defendants, though, filed the pleadings that insisted on the necessity of putting Brown’s name in the charging documents.

“The information in this case was only filed in March and much of the delay since then has been taken up by motions and petitions brought by both sides,” Lizama said.

“The court can find no delay here that results from seriously derelict behavior by either side and sees no undue prejudice to the defendant from the delay,” the judge added.

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HEALTHY SNACKS

The Women's Affairs Office donated on Tuesday boxes of healthy refreshments to the soldiers and family members who gathered at the U.S. Army Reserve at Lower Base. The CNMI reservists left Wednesday afternoon to begin training before their deployment to the Middle East.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Gov. Juan N. Babauta joined members of the CNMI State Board of Education and Public School System on Tuesday to sign an "Exchange Program Agreement" with the Seoul Dongbu District Office of Education (SDDOE) from Korea. During their stay in the Northern Marianas, SDDOE president Kim Myoung Kyoo and his companions will visit Kagman Elementary School, Chacha Junior High School, and Tinian High School. Babauta strongly recommended that they also visit the "most beautiful of the three islands—Rota."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OSHA INSTRUCTORS

Gov. Juan N. Babauta, second from right, poses with, left to right, Nancy Hauter, Mike Anderson, and Frank Perrino following Tuesday's opening ceremony at the 2nd Annual Governor's Health and Safety Conference at the Dai Ichi Hotel. The three are OSHA instructors from the OSHA Training Institute in Chicago. They will be instructors for various classes being taught at the four-day conference.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



BITTERSWEET FAREWELL

Many flocked to the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport with poster boards on Wednesday to show support for the local soldiers before their departure to Hawaii.

SHAN SEMAN



AGNES E. DONATO

"The hardest part is leaving the family," said soldier Peter Aldan, shown in this photo with his wife Joanne and their two children—aged 5 years and 5 months, respectively.



SHAN SEMAN

Peter Camacho, sixth from left, takes time for a snap shot with family members before departure Wednesday afternoon at the Saipan International Airport.

Reservist Dwight Pangelinan, fourth from right, poses with family members and Sen. Luis Crisostimo at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport shortly before leaving for Hawaii Wednesday afternoon.



SHAN SEMAN

NIKKO

Gun proliferation worries PNG oil companies

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (The National, PIR)—Papua New Guinea’s Southern Highlands has been likened to a “disaster waiting to happen” because of the proliferation of high-powered guns in the province.

The chairmen of the two producing oil fields, of Gobe and Kutubu, said yesterday that only drastic Government action would prevent a collapse of authority which would see the facilities closed and spark off wide spread violence and blood shed.

Unfettered influx of high-powered guns over a decade has made sure that each village is fully armed, Petroleum Resources Gobe chairman Phillip Kende said yesterday.

“They are using royalty, equity and compensation payments to buy the guns,” Mr Kende said.

Mr Kende said he was also speaking on behalf of Petroleum Resources Kutubu chairman John Kapi Natto who was away in Honiara, Solomon Islands on a family emergency.

Chairman Kende said that each village is now armed with the latest in military hardware, including sub-machine guns and that any incident would spark off blood letting and violence on a serious level.

Mr Kende is concerned that any violence might shut down the oil fields of Kutube, Gobe and Moran and the Hides gas fields.

The facilities presently provide for nearly half of the country’s annual export revenue. Oil from the fields also feed the recently opened Napa Napa oil refinery in Port Moresby.

He said because of the pay-back tradition and because the province is big and borders many provinces, any violence in the Southern Highlands is going to impact right across the nation.

Mr Kende said: “The Department of Petroleum and Energy officials are aware of this situation. The resource developers are also aware of this but both parties are scared to do anything about it.

“The department as a regulating and monitoring body should monitor this situation and report to Government instead of getting involved in landowner politics which has the potential to spark of the whole thing.

“I congratulate the Government for taking the initiative to take drastic action and I want to encourage it to pursue this programme very aggressively. I cannot comment on the politics of the situation but I must alert the nation to the seriousness of this problem.”

Mr Kende said guns are being purchased in the Western province and brought over land into the Southern Highlands. Guns are also brought in via aircraft charters and by road transport into the area.

He said people have their own names for the guns so that a reference to a stone or tree or animals would indicate a type of gun.

A sub-machine gun is referred in one place to as “Bulla” which in the Samberigi tongue refers to a dog legend that is supposed to have spiritual attachments to the people. It was purchased for K30,000.

An AR 15 rifle is called “Wisi” which is the name of a mountain in the area.

The Government on July 29 deliberated on the state of affairs in the Southern Highlands and decided against a state of emergency and suspension of the Provincial Government to prevent progressive disintegration of established order.

Recognition continues for deployed NMI servicemen

Since May 25, 2004, page three of the Tuesday and Thursday editions of the Saipan Tribune shows pictures of U.S. military personnel hailing from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota who are currently deployed overseas.

This ad campaign celebrating the service of U.S. military personnel hailing from the CNMI is courtesy of the office of Rep. Claudio K. Norita.

Norita’s ad campaign, dubbed “CNMI Heroes: Fighting against tyranny, defending freedom and democracy,” is also proudly co-sponsored by House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial, Vice Speaker Timothy P. Villagomez, and Rep. Ray N. Yumul.

Norita and his colleagues are sponsoring the ads to pay tribute

to the service and sacrifices of CNMI residents who have enlisted in the U.S. Armed Forces and are stationed overseas.

“I think it is very important for us to recognize the patriotic contributions of our local servicemen and women, and let them know how much we care about them, so that their morale remains high,” Norita said.

As part of this morale boosting campaign, Norita’s office continues to invite family members of deployed U.S. servicemen to submit names and photographs of loved ones currently serving aboard, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq. All information should be referred to Norita’s office for publication (664-8987).

Motheread/Fatheread schedule out

The CNMI Motheread/Fatheread® schedule for its upcoming classes is as follows:

- 6pm Mondays starting Aug. 23 at Garapan Youth Learning Center
- 6pm Tuesdays starting Aug. 24 at Tanapag Head Start Center
- 6pm Wednesdays starting Aug. 25 at San Roque Head Start Center
- 6pm Thursdays starting Aug. 26 at Kagman II Head Start Center
- 10am Saturdays starting Aug. 28 at Kagman III Head Start Center

The classes run for eight weeks and meet one time a week. They are free. They are open to anyone wanting to learn how to read effectively with children as well as improve their own reading skills.

For more information contact the Motheread/Fatheread coordinator at 235-4785 or 235-7323.

CNMI Motheread/Fatheread is a family literacy program sponsored by the NMI Council for the Humanities and the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library.

Solomons to celebrate International Coconut Day

HONIARA, Solomon Islands (SIBC, PIR)—The Solomon Islands will mark International Coconut Day on September 2 with the theme, “Coconut, God’s gift for Livelihood, Peace and Economic Recovery for Solomon Islands”.

Activities to mark the day will aim to highlight the importance of the coconut tree in the sustenance of life and economy of the country.

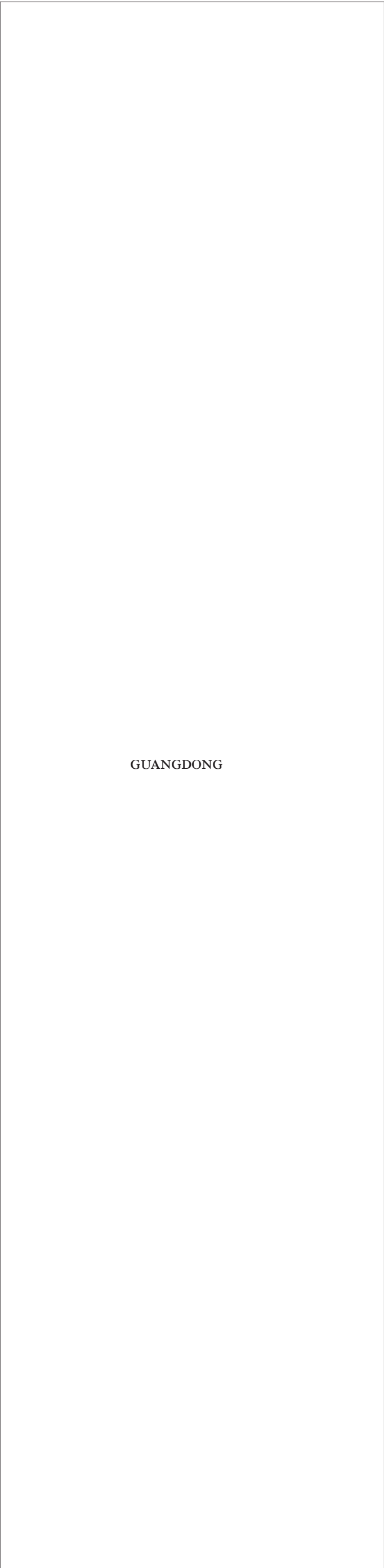
Chairman for the Working Committee John Smith Vollraith says while the day will aim to reaffirm the usefulness of coconut in the social traditions such as food, handicrafts, utensils and everyday needs, it will also aim to show, through demonstra-

tions simple appropriate production, processing, and the use of diverse coconut products.

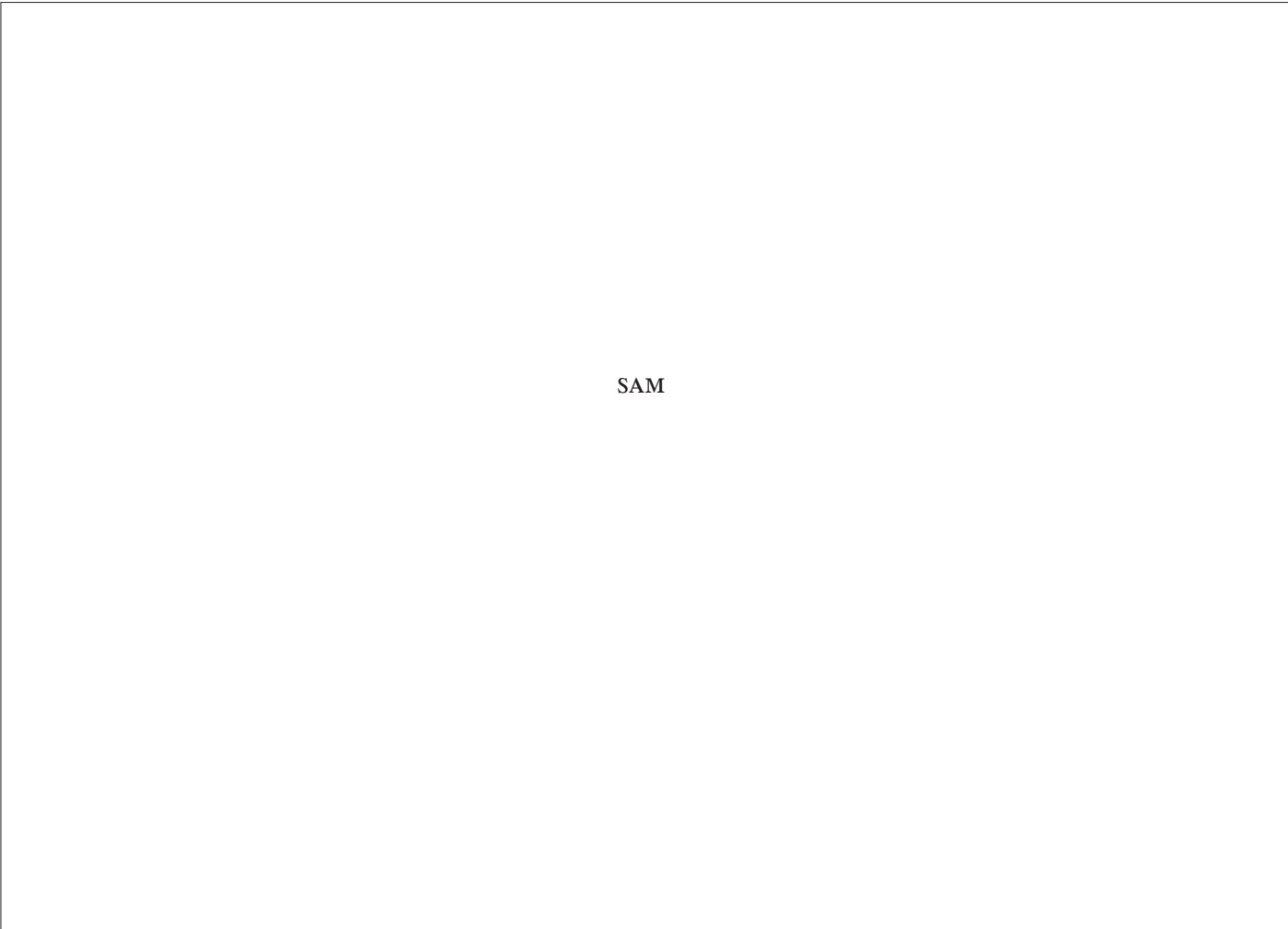
He says it is hoped that such activities and aim will, in some small way, educate the government and aid donors of the full potential of diverse coconut products, and enable them rethink their attitude to investigating their resources, to develop a sustainable coconut industry.

The day’s programs will include displays of handicrafts and carvings made from Coconut products, food preparations based on coconut products, coconut processing technologies, copra driers, and essays relating to coconut products.

ACE
+RED



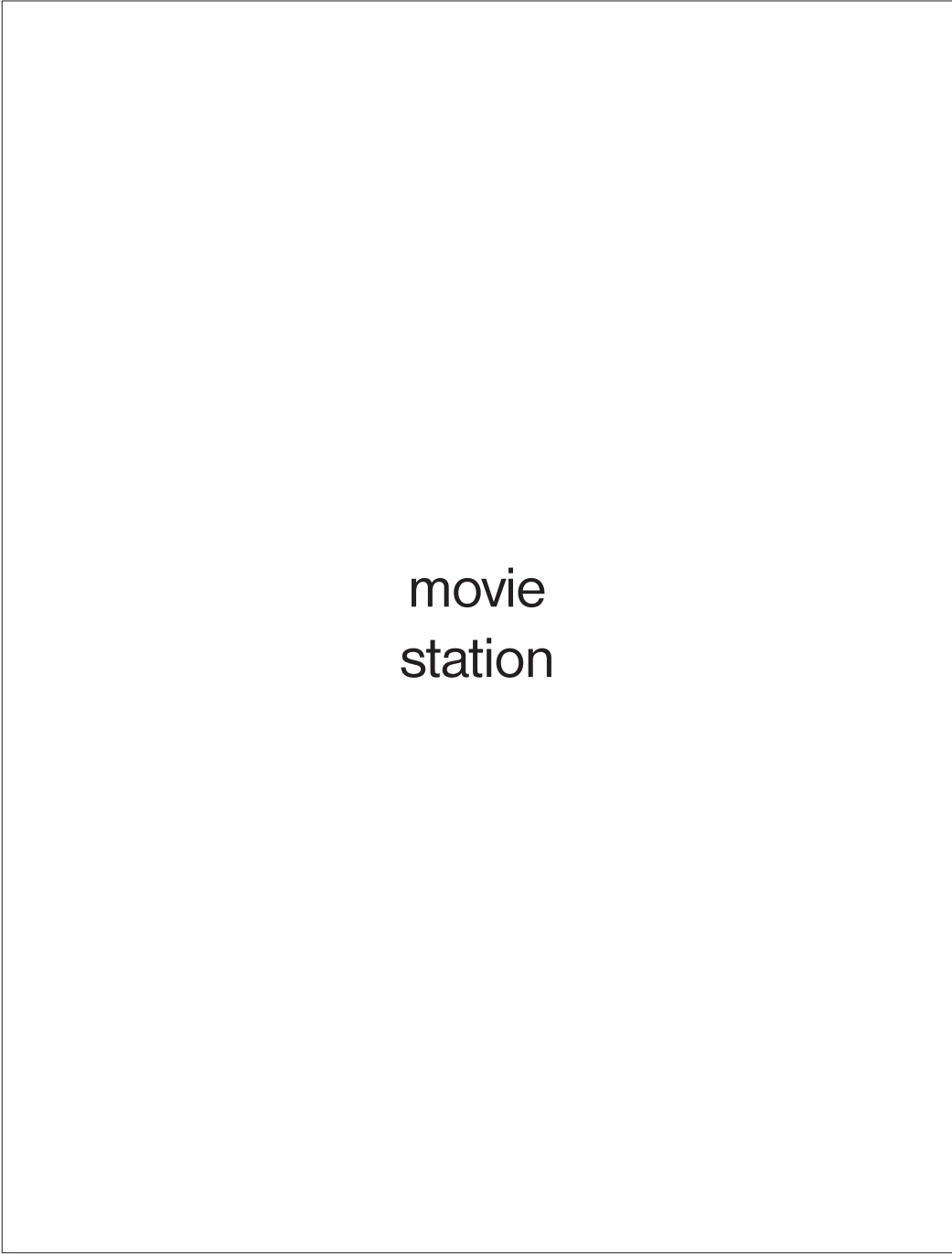
GUANGDONG



SAM



iconnect
cmyk



movie
station



Opinion

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Pacific Islands News Association

Letters to the Editor

Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.

By ED STEPHENS

Ed Stephens, Jr. is an economist and columnist for the Saipan Tribune.
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By MOHAMMAD ASHRAF, PH.D.

Ashraf is an International Resource Economist. He is solely responsible for the views expressed in this column and doesn't represent the views of Saipan Tribune. His email address is ashmdr@hotmail.com



CTC's choice 'unsure' of audit work on Verizon deal

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Telecommunications Commission may have hastily named a Majuro-based accountant to perform audit work on Pacific Telecom Inc., as he is reportedly unsure if he is willing to perform the work in connection with the proposed sale of Verizon's local operations from Micronesian Telecommunications Corp.

This was learned after Gov. Juan N. Babauta and CNMI consumer counsel

Brian Caldwell, in a joint submission to the CTC, asked that the commission reconsider its decision appointing Greg Tarasar as financial consultant to the telecom deal.

Babauta's lawyer, Assistant Attorney General James Livingstone, said he recently contacted Tarasar, who allegedly claimed that he was "still unsure whether or not he planned on submitting a proposed scope of work."

"He [Tarasar] needed to talk to his partner in Guam first before he could decide whether or not to undertake

the required work," Livingstone said. "He was not sure what issues would need to be examined."

Livingstone and Caldwell pushed for the appointment of Boston-based Economics and Technology Inc. firm to perform the audit work. The company has submitted with the CTC a proposal, wherein it declared that it could perform the entire scope of work needed based on the agreement of MTC and PTI with the governor and the consumer counsel.

Besides PTI's financial capability,

the audit work needs to run projections on Verizon's post-sale future revenues based upon a best case, worst case, and baseline scenarios.

The parties earlier agreed to contract the service of Deloitte and Touche, but the company had declared that it could not run the sensitivity analysis based on accounting's best practices and company policy. Later, however, it said it could do such an analysis based on assumptions agreed to by the parties, which could not be reached.

Babauta and Caldwell said ETI is

competent to perform the required scope of work, citing its extensive experience in the telecommunications field. The company claimed it could complete a draft report within a 40-day timeframe, which is comparable to that given by Delloite and Touché.

Babauta and Caldwell said ETI could perform the work for \$54,450 to \$64,450. They asked the CTC to declare that ETI has submitted the best qualifications and that the company be appointed as financial consultant in the audit work.

Employers told to file complete JVAs

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Division of Employment Services has urged employers to comply with all the job vacancy announcement requirements to avoid paying double and facing the inconvenience of re-announcing.

This came on the heels of the Aug. 6 implementation of the new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, which require employers to include all compensations and benefits they offer workers to be included in the JVA. The

policy change aims to encourage more resident workers to apply for jobs in the private sector.

DES director Alfred Pangelinan said the division is now working to ensure that JVAs contain all the necessary information before employers bring them to the media for publication or broadcast.

He admitted that some JVAs manage to "slip through the cracks and go to the media" with incomplete information. One of the most common cases involves employers who declare no benefits in their JVA application. This could never be the case

as the workman compensation and medical benefits are mandatory.

Employers, however, cannot get away with it even then, he added.

Pangelinan noted that when the 15-day announcement period is finished, the certified JVA and employment contract are both submitted to the Division of Labor. If the Labor Division finds upon comparison that the employer did not advertise any of the benefits given to the hired alien worker, then the employer will be required to re-announce the available position for another 15 days and again pay for advertising.

SUGAR

From Page 1

clinging to his father's floating body.

Before this, three Chinese and a male Chamorro also drowned at Sugar Dock.

Camacho yesterday called on hotel owners to provide lifeguards at their respective beach sites.

"We encourage them to do that. We need each other here. It's not safe if we don't work together. If there's a pool or beach in your premises, you've got to have a lifeguard," he said.

Meantime, Camacho said he hopes that the Marianas Public Lands Authority will give DPS a place at Sugar Dock for jet stations to encourage livelihood while improving safety in the area.

He also called on the public "to take swimming lessons" for personal safety. "Let's be water-sport smart from the start. It's important that we know how to swim because we're surrounded by a vast ocean."

Camacho said the occurrence of several drownings at the Sugar Dock justifies looking at proposed develop-

mental projects for the area.

"It's time that we need to look at [the proposal] again," he said, referring to the proposed commercial development of the dock, which was opposed by many residents for cultural and ecological reasons.

The project involved dredging that would improve water currents in the area.

For his part, Muna, who is head of the Boating Safety Division, advised people to stay away from the waters during bad weather and rough sea conditions.

BOG

From Page 1

to alter the amount listed on an MPLA request for transfer of its funds at the bank to pay for land compensation claims.

In an Aug. 16 letter to Ada, Bank of Guam assistant vice president and trust officer Joseph H. Paulino quoted Davis as saying that, "Only the MPLA can approve the amounts to be paid to land claimants and only the MPLA can change the amounts due to land claimants."

"Therefore, any compensation amounts...[originally] approved...by MPLA will not be altered in any way without the full consent of MPLA," Paulino added.

The Bank of Guam official also described the disbursement process for land claimant payments. (*See sidebar*)

The *Saipan Tribune* repeatedly

phoned Ada for her comments yesterday, but she was unavailable. Neither did she return the calls.

On June 18, upon the MPLA board's approval, Hofschneider and MPLA comptroller David S. Demapan prepared a request for the transfer of \$216,322 of MPLA's funds at Bank of Guam to pay for land compensation claims.

The amount was earlier approved by the board. It was also concurred by the Finance Secretary. The drawdown request was then forwarded to CDA for processing, and then sent to the bank.

However, the document that reached the bank was different from the one originally prepared by Hofschneider and Demapan. The amount \$216,322 was altered with a strikethrough and above it was typed \$134,695.91. Beside the alteration were Ada's initials.

For allowing Ada to make the change without informing the board, MPLA chair Ana Demapan-Castro

suspended Hofschneider for an initial 15-day period. The suspension was later extended, pending the resolution of an investigation that Demapan-Castro requested from the Attorney General's Office.

For his part, Hofschneider had claimed that Ada had authority over requisitions for fund drawdown and therefore, he committed no violation when he allowed her to deduct \$81,626.09 from the requisition document.

"For your information, requisitions for fund drawdown are prepared at my call and are not subject to...[the] MPLA [board's] approval. For example, Requisition Nos. FY04-01, FY04-02, and FY04-03 were all prepared at my instructions and sent to the Secretary of Finance for his concurrence and then to CDA, without the Board of MPLA ever approving any one of them," Hofschneider had said.

Hofschneider remains suspended.

The most recent typhoon to hit the islands, Tingting, prompted a major disaster declaration for the Northern Marianas by President Bush.

Tingting, which made its closest approach on Saipan on June 28, dumped record-breaking rainfall on the island, flooding several portions of the island. The typhoon also left the island with knocked down trees, flooded roads, power outages, and about 200 people displaced from their homes.

STORM

From Page 1

of Tinian, and some 1,090 miles east of Rota.

As of 4pm yesterday, 19W had maximum sustained winds of 35mph gusting to 45mph, and was moving west-northwest at 12 mph. The EMO said 12W was expected to slowly intensify.

The distance of the weather disturbance may allow it to intensify further

lease, it's an acquisition," he said.

NMC bought the La Fiesta complex in Aug. 2003 for \$7.5 million, using a \$3.5 million federal grant from the Office of the Governor as deposit.

The deal resulted in NMC incurring a \$4 million debt, payable in 20 years at \$200,000 annually beginning this year. Under the agreement, NMC is required to pay the first \$200,000 installment on or before Oct. 31 this year.

NMC's \$350,000 budget request would cover the \$200,000 obligation and \$150,000 operations budget up to December.

Last year, the college petitioned the Legislature to help find some \$10 million to renovate La Fiesta, a shopping mall, and convert it to a campus.

"Remember that by doing that [converting the mall], you're injuring, killing another industry—tourism. Now, who would commit \$10 million in 19 years for La Fiesta?" Hofschneider asked.

He said that NMC has created its own crisis when it went ahead with the project. "Now, they're asking us for bailout; otherwise, they'd go on crisis. The crisis has been created. It's not the obligation of the taxpayers to shoulder [that]," he said.

Hofschneider added that the CNMI does not seem to have learned its lesson in the \$10-million Mitsubishi deal that had landed former Gov. Froilan Tenorio in court.

He said the \$3.5 million deposit on the mall purchase could have done tremendous improvements at NMC's present campus in As Terlaje.

"Did we really need to acquire La Fiesta? Is it the taxpayers' responsibility to get La Fiesta going? If we go ahead with it, we've legitimized an illegitimate action," he said.

Fitial, who met with NMC officials Wednesday, said there may be an alternative to funding NMC's La Fiesta: He said the governor can use capital improvement project funds to fund the mall's conversion.

"So, if the governor is really pushing for this, he has the authority to declare it as CIP," he said.

"That's the only way to skirt that," said Hofschneider, while noting that the federal government would not approve of a project that cannot be funded.

Hofschneider also said the governor could request the Legislature for additional funding to address the issue.

"But it's unlikely for the governor to be asking for additional budget because we never had one. [The previous Legislature] didn't approve one," he said.

Following the opposition from the minority bloc, Quitugua moved to amend the bill to delete all references to NMC.

The bill originally aimed to appropriate \$15,000 for the Joeten-Kiyu Library and \$80,000 for the Public School System.

JOETEN MOTORS KIA
+BLUE

SAIPAN TRIBUNE	FRIDAY, AUGUST 20, 2004	15
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Business



brown tree snake

DIAL RENT



STAR & STRIPES



verizon
CMYK

Nation

club jama

labor

marpac

nmhc

jws

shell
cmyk

Asia

Maoist rebels blockade Nepal capital city

By BINAJ GURUBACHARYA
AP WRITER

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Without setting up a roadblock or even making an appearance, Maoist rebels cut off the capital from the rest of this Himalayan kingdom by declaring a blockade Wednesday, leaving Katmandu with only a few days of food and cooking fuel.

Extra police took to the roads leading into the city, but no drivers defied the guerrillas. In the past, rebels have burned dozens of vehicles and planted mines to enforce blockades, and early this week they threw a bomb at a luxury hotel for disregarding an order to shut down.

The government promised to provide security for travelers, but that didn't reassure civilians.

"Who is going to take such a big risk?" truck driver Mahesh Lama said. "Even if we get protection today, the rebels could take action against us for refusing their order tomorrow or even next week."

Because it is the rainy season, there were relatively few tourists in Katmandu, and only few of them had left because of the unrest, hotel managers said. So far, they said, there had

been no cancellations for the main season, which begins in September. The Soaltee Hotel closed and moved its guests to other hotels after the bomb hurled over a wall exploded on its tennis court Monday night.

The rebels-- inspired by Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong—have been fighting since 1996 to replace Nepal's monarchy with a communist state. More than 9,500 people have died in the war, most of them in rural areas far from the capital.

The guerrillas have struck Katmandu before, planting bombs under buses and motorcycles to enforce strikes or inspiring students to shut down schools. But Wednesday's blockade was unusual because it was succeeding simply on fear.

There were no reports of rebels setting up barricades on any roads, and police officers told The Associated Press they had seen no guerrillas. But the insurgents were believed to be watching the roads, which were empty except for military and police vehicles.

The rebels sent a brief notice to newspapers last week saying that beginning Wednesday they would impose the blockade for an indefinite period to pressure

the government to free jailed guerrillas immediately and provide information on others who are missing. They threatened to attack any vehicles traveling on the highways.

Other than planes, which are too expensive for most in this impoverished nation, roads are the only way to travel in the Katmandu Valley, and its 1.5 million people depend on trucks to bring fuel, food and other goods.

Many store owners said they would run out of vegetables and other food if the blockade lasted for more than a few days.

Iswor Pokhrel, minister for industries, commerce and supplies, said the city had a few days supply of kerosene for cooking. Officials at Nepal Oil Corp., the country's sole petroleum distributor, said it had enough fuel for cars and buses to last about two weeks.

With buses sitting idle, hundreds of people milled about in the capital's main station.

"We have little money left and we have no idea when we will be able to get home. We are going to starve and probably have to sleep out in the open," said Rupesh Khatri, who had brought his son to a hospital in Katmandu for treatment and

wanted to go home.

Some of Nepal's biggest businesses already had suspended operations this week because of threats from the rebels. After the Soaltee Hotel was bombed, the largest cigarette manufacturer, Surya Nepal Ltd., and Bottlers Nepal, the company bottling Coca-Cola, shut down.

The government of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba had no comment Wednesday on the rebels' demands.

Authorities refuse to say how many rebels are in detention. Nepalese law allows soldiers to detain people suspected of being rebels for 90 days without charge, but human rights groups claim many are kept much longer.

Peace talks broke down last August when the rebels walked out, accusing the government of failing to meet their demands, including elections for a special assembly to draft a new constitution.

A new government took office in June and has repeatedly called for more negotiations, but the rebels have not responded.

"The peace process was moving in the right direction but such acts don't assist the process," Pokhrel, the commerce minister, said of the blockade.



A police officer keeps watch on the Prthivi Highway during a blockade on the outskirts of Katmandu, Nepal, Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2004.

shell
cmyk

Rebels free RP soldiers after 5 months

By **JIM GOMEZ**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW PEOPLE’S ARMY ENCAMPMENT, Philippines (AP)—Communist guerrillas in the eastern Philippines on Wednesday released two soldiers captured in a March gun-battle, in a humanitarian gesture to counter Washington’s claims that they are terrorists.

It wasn’t clear, however, if the release would effect peace talks to end a 35-year-old Maoist insurgency. Last week, the rebels

indefinitely postponed the next round of Norwegian-brokered negotiations in protest at their continuing inclusion on U.S. and European terrorist lists.

Guarded by black-clad New People’s Army guerrillas, 1st Lt. Ronaldo Fidelino and Pfc. Ronnel Nemenon walked out of a humid tropical jungle in south-eastern Camarines Sur province, about 300 kilometers (185 miles) southeast of the capital, Manila.

A guerrilla leader, Russel Guerrero, signed a release order in front of dozens of vil-

lagers in Presentacion town, where the soldiers were interviewed by lawyers and underwent a medical checkup.

“The proper treatment and release of the prisoners of war is proof that we are not terrorists,” Guerrero said.

The soldiers were handed over to representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and then received by government negotiator Silvestre Bello III and their families.

“I am finally free. I’m so happy,” said Fidelino, who hugged his wife and daughter in a tearful reunion.

Both captives had grown beards and wore camouflage pants and white shirts marked

“POW.” They said they were shaken by nearly six months in captivity, but were treated well despite being handcuffed most of the time.

At times, the soldiers played chess with their captors or sang songs. One guerrilla crafted rings and bracelets from wild vines for Fidelino’s wife and daughter and others caught parakeets for the soldiers to take home.

“We are friends now but once I’m back at work as a soldier and deployed in the battlefield, we’re of course enemies again,” Fidelino said.

Chief rebel negotiator Luis Jalandoni said the soldiers were released on humanitarian grounds. He said the army had

agreed to suspend its operations in the region for a week after they are released to allow the guerrillas to safely withdraw.

“We think this safe and orderly release will improve the atmosphere in overcoming the problems that have arisen,” he said, referring to the peace talks.

The Marxist umbrella group, the National Democratic Front, which includes the 8,500-strong New People’s Army rebels, postponed the next round of peace talks, scheduled for next week in Oslo, Norway, to give the government time to “fulfill its obligations.”

The rebels want the government to help get the New People’s Army removed from

American and European Union lists of foreign terrorist organizations. It also wants political prisoners released and compensation for victims of human rights abuses under late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Jalandoni said if the government makes a “dramatic” move such as releasing all political prisoners, “the peace talks can be resumed very soon.”

Despite the talks, there is no permanent cease-fire and sporadic fighting continues.

Bello said Tuesday that Manila has asked the United States, the European Union and the Netherlands to “judge (the rebel group) through its participation in the peace process.”

China appeals to N. Korea for nuke talks

BEIJING (AP)—China appealed to North Korea on Tuesday to join working meetings before a new round of six-party talks on dismantling its nuclear program, despite the North’s declaration that it saw no point in attending.

“All the parties should agree to hold the framework meeting as soon as possible,” said Ning Fukui, China’s ambassador on the Korean nuclear issue. He was speaking outside a meeting with Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, who was en route to North Korea.

Ning’s appeal came after North Korea said Monday it was impossible for its diplomats to attend the meeting, complaining that the United States wasn’t interested in “making the dialogue fruitful.”

The last round of talks ended in June without major progress toward a settlement but with a promise to hold a new round by the end of September and for lower-level officials to gather before that to work on technical details. Other participants in the talks organized by China are

South Korea, Japan and Russia.

“We believe that if all the parties show their sincerity and flexibility and further clarify their stance and proposals, then a new compromise can be reached,” Ning said.

Ning said he couldn’t say when the meeting might take place, but added, “I believe the North Koreans will not withdraw from the six-way talks process under current conditions.”

The North Korean government complained Monday that Washington has “destroyed ... the foundation for the talks, making it impossible for the (North Korea) to go to the forthcoming meeting of the working group.”

But Ning insisted the North Koreans “did not say they will not participate.” Instead, he said, “they expressed that due to the differences that exist over their stance between North Korea and the United States, there is no basis for holding the meeting.”

The dispute flared in 2002 when Washington said North Korea admitted operating a secret uranium-based nuclear program in violation of a 1994 agreement.

S. Korean party leader steps down in scandal

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The head of South Korea’s ruling party resigned Thursday amid suggestions he had covered up his father’s past as a military policeman for Japanese occupiers.

Shin Ki-nam, chairman of the ruling Uri party, had previously said his father was only a teacher during the 1910-45 occupation. But this week, he was forced to admit his father worked for the Japanese forces, confirming a magazine report.

The implication that Shin may have lied to cover up his father’s past has made him a political liability as the country debates the role of collaborators during South Korea’s colonial past. President Roh Moo-hyun has called for government investigations into the pro-Japa-

nese activities of collaborators.

Shin apologized to those who fought for Korean independence, bowing his head before journalists at a news conference Thursday. “In place of my father, I deeply apologize and seek forgiveness,” he said.

Shin said he was stepping down from the party’s chairmanship so he wouldn’t be an obstacle to inquiries into the colonial period, and to “lessen difficulties that the party is experiencing because of me.”

Shin said the past three days since the revelations had been the most difficult in his life, and that he would seek to unearth more about his father’s history. He said he hadn’t known his father had served in the Japanese military during the occupation.

shell back to school
cmyk

Photos of terror suspects are published in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan published photos Wednesday in newspapers across the country of six terror suspects—including a senior al-Qaida operative—it says were behind attempts to assassinate the nation’s president and offered a large reward for their capture.

The identities of the men highlighted the chilling nexus between several homegrown Pakistani militant groups and Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaida network. The government says al-Qaida had a hand in two December assassination attempts against President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, as well as a July attempt against prime minister-designate Shaukat Aziz.

Musharraf identified the main suspect as Abu Faraj al-Libbi, a Libyan national. The government had never published a

photo of him until Wednesday. Al-Libbi appears in the photo as a dapper looking man with a short beard. He is wearing a Western suit and tie in the photograph, above a 20 million rupee reward offer, or \$344,800. The other suspects, all identified as Pakistan’s “Most Wanted Terrorists,” are Matigur Rehman, Amjad Hussain, Qari Ehsan, Omar Aqdas, and Mansoor—whose alias is Chota Ibrahim. All are Pakistani and known to be linked with Pakistan’s Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militant group. It was not clear exactly what the other five men are wanted for or what role—if any—they had in the assassination attempts. The advertisements promised anonymity for any informants and gave phone numbers and e-mail addresses to contact authorities. Some posters were printed in English and some in Urdu, Pakistan’s other official language. Hussain, who is best known as Amjad Hussain Farooqi, is also wanted for his part in the 2002 kidnapping and beheading of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl. In some accounts, Hussain recruited three Yemenis for the task and supervised it. In others, he carried out the butchery himself. Hussain is also believed linked to al-Qaida’s former No. 3, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the accused mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks who was arrested in Pakistan in March 2003, and to two Pakistani militant groups - Lashkar-e-Jangvi and Jaish-e-Mohammed. The reward for Hussain is identical to that for Al-Libbi.



Typhoon lashes southern Japan, 8 dead

TOKYO (AP)—Heavy rain fueled by a typhoon lashed southern Japan, leaving eight people dead and causing landslides and blackouts, officials said Thursday. Two people were missing. Several inches of rain have fallen in some areas as Typhoon Megi brushed the main southern islands of Kyushu and Shikoku, the Meteorological Agency said.

Megi was downgraded to tropical storm with winds of 67 mph Thursday as it passed near northwestern Nagsaki, 680 miles southwest of Tokyo. It was traveling toward the southern tip of the Korean peninsula.

In Kagawa Prefecture (state) in Shikoku, a 74-year-old farmer was found dead after he fell into a swollen canal Tuesday. Three more elderly people were killed by flooding rivers, police said.

In nearby Ehime, three men and a woman were killed, one by drowning and the others in mudslids, local police said.

More than 4,700 people were ordered to evacuate their homes in Kagawa, and nearly 300 in Ehime. National broadcaster NHK reported that more than 600 homes had been flooded in Shikoku.

Cease-fire holding in western Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A cease-fire between warring militias in western Afghanistan held on Wednesday, officials said, easing a conflict that has sounded alarm bells from Kabul to the United Nations about the need to improve security ahead of landmark elections. Dozens of people were re-

ported killed or wounded in fighting which broke out last week between Herat Gov. Ismail Khan, a powerful regional leader, and a local rival.

With U.S. warplanes circling overhead, Afghan and American officials mediated a truce on Tuesday, and leaders on both sides said Wednesday that their guns remained silent.

Amanullah, the rebel commander who agreed to abandon a push toward the provincial capital under the cease-fire, said he didn’t know how long it would hold.

Report: China arrests 8 priests in raid

SHANGHAI, China (AP)—Police in northern China detained eight priests from the underground Catholic Church in a raid on a religious retreat, a U.S.-based religious monitoring group reported.

Priests Huo Junlong, Zhang Zhenqian and another identified simply as Father Huang were among those held following the Aug. 6 raid on the village of Sujiazhuang in Hebei province, the Cardinal Kung Foundation reported.

The names of the other five priests weren’t immediately known, said the group, which is based in Stamford, Connecticut. It said two seminary students were also detained in the raid.

All are being held at a detention center in the Hebei city of Baoding, it said. A man who answered the phone at the bureau said he had no information about the report.

Annan calls for release of Suu Kyi

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan called Tuesday for the immediate release of Myan-

mar’s opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, urging the government to show a commitment to restoring democracy.

Annan warned that Myanmar’s efforts to draft a new constitution will lack international credibility until the government considers opposition views. On July 9, Myanmar adjourned a constitution-drafting convention after nearly two months of closed-door discussions. It is unclear when it will resume.

The convention, which began May 17, was billed by the junta as a first step toward restoring democracy, but has been dismissed by the opposition as a sham. Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy party, or NLD, boycotted the convention because the government refuses to release her from house arrest.

Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, has been in detention since May 2003.

Chinese official sentenced to death

BEIJING (AP)—An official once in charge of guarding cultural relics has been sentenced to death in China’s biggest antiquities theft case since the start of communist rule in 1949.

Li Haitao was convicted of stealing 259 objects, some of them national treasures, from an imperial villa in Chengde, a city north of Beijing, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Tuesday.

Li was sentenced Friday by a court in Chengde, where he was security chief for the city’s Cultural Relics Bureau, the report said.

Four accomplices were sentenced to terms ranging from two to seven years for trafficking in stolen relics, Xinhua said.

Li pocketed 3.8 million yuan—about \$460,000—by selling the relics, Xinhua said.

CPA

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Asia

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A Police dog team searches for bodies trapped in buildings and cars in Bosccastle, Cornwall, England, Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2004.

AP

Copters rescue 57 trapped by landslides

LONDON (AP)—More than 50 people were rescued by two military helicopters Wednesday after landslides caused by heavy rains trapped their vehicles on a highway in Scotland, police said.

Police said none of the 20 vehicles involved were covered by the two landslides, which fell in front of them and behind them.

After several hours, the rescue operation managed to take all the 57 people trapped at the scene near the village of Lochearnhead to safety aboard a navy and an army helicopter, police said.

It was the second time in three days that heavy rainfalls in Britain had trapped people, forcing quick rescue operations. On Monday, a flash flood devastated a village in southwestern England, forcing seven emergency helicopters to rescue scores of people from cars, rooftops and trees.

Many cars were washed by the floodwaters into the harbor of the seaside village Boscastle, which has about 800 residents.

Two buildings collapsed under the weight of the flood waters and scores more were dam-

aged by debris including trees, branches, stones and rubble. At least eight people were treated for conditions ranging from hypothermia to broken bones.

On Wednesday, Prince Charles visited Boscastle and promised to donate money to a fund created to help the many victims of the three-foot wall of water that poured through the streets of the small town at 40 mph.

After a briefing from members of emergency services in the village, Prince Charles said: "Well done, you are amazing."

In Scotland, the Royal Navy helicopter raced to Lochearnhead on Wednesday to rescue the 56 people whose vehicles were stranded on a nearby highway by the two landslides, police said.

None of the victims appeared to be in danger, but rescue crews could only reach the scene by helicopter, police said.

Residents in the beautiful tourist area of mountains and lochs northwest of Edinburgh reported widespread flooding caused by more than two hours of heavy rain.

El Salvador jail riot kills at least 23 prisoners

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—Rival prisoners fought each other with knives and sticks Wednesday at a San Salvador jail, leaving at least 23 people dead and more than 24 others injured, police said.

The riot began before dawn when gang members clashed with other prisoners, deputy police commissioner Pedro Gonzalez said. More than 3,000 prisoners are being held at the facility, which was

designed to jail 800 people.

"We believe there could be more dead and injured, but we still need to control the third section of the prison," Gonzalez said.

No prisoners had escaped during the riot, which began as a battle between rival prisoners, he said. Witnesses reported hearing explosions during the riot, but officials could not confirm the source of the noise.

"Many of the injuries are seri-

ous," emergency official Daniel Chavez said. "The last (person) we took out was already dying."

Central American nations, especially Honduras, have struggled to make their prisons safer, even as officials crack down on violent gangs and crowd jails with more prisoners.

In May, a fire at a northern Honduras prison killed 106 people. Officials said the fire was caused by an air conditioner

short-circuit that ignited bedding and curtains and spread quickly.

Survivors say the inferno was set deliberately.

On April 5, 2003, an uprising in Honduras' El Porvenir prison farm, 220 miles north of the capital, left nearly 70 people dead. A government report blamed guards for many of the deaths.

Some prisoners were locked in their cells, doused with gasoline and set on fire.



British TV reporter convicted of murder

LONDON (AP)—A man described as an undercover reporter for British news outlets was convicted of murder Wednesday for torturing a man to death in front of his children.

James Raven, 44, who had worked for the British Broadcasting Corp. and Channel 4 television, subjected drug dealer Brian Waters to systematic and barbaric torture at a farm in Tabley, a village in central England, last year, the court was told.

With his adult son and daughter tied up and forced to watch, 44-year-old Waters was beaten, whipped, burned and attacked with an industrial staple gun, according to testimony.

He was then hung upside down and sexually assaulted with an iron bar, causing fatal internal injuries, the court heard.

A Crown Court jury found Raven, of Greater Manchester, guilty of murder and two counts of conspiracy to commit grievous bodily harm.

8 terror suspects appear in British court

LONDON (AP)—Eight suspects, including a man identified by the United States as a senior al-Qaida figure, appeared in a London court under heavy guard Wednesday as police investigated their alleged plot to commit murder and to cause mayhem with chemical, biological or radioactive materials.

A prosecutor also said police were searching about 100 computers and thousands of files, suggesting a protracted investigation that could produce more charges against the suspects, who were seized in raids across England two weeks ago.

The eight suspects, including an alleged al-Qaida operative linked to a terror alert in the United States this month, did not enter pleas Wednesday and were ordered detained until their next court appearance Aug. 25.

Israeli helicopter fires at Gaza building

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—An Israeli helicopter fired two missiles in Gaza City after nightfall Wednesday, one at a building in the Zeitoun neighborhood, witnesses said, setting a fire.

Residents said the first missile's target was a car battery factory, in a building with two empty apartments. Rescue workers could not approach the structure because of burning chemicals and but said there were no casualties.

The target of the second missile strike was not immediately known.

The targeted building belongs to the family of Reem Raiyshi, who blew herself up at the Erez checkpoint between Israel and Gaza in January, killing four Israelis. She was the only female suicide bomber from Gaza.

Pope recovers from grueling trip to France

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (AP)—Days after returning from a grueling trip to France, Pope John Paul II appeared in better shape Wednesday and expressed thanks for his visit to the shrine of Lourdes.

The 84-year-old pontiff, who suffers from Parkinson's disease and other physical ailments, skipped much of his prepared text Wednesday, as he often does to cut down the exhausting length of public addresses. However, in a greeting to French visitors, the pope spoke warmly of his recent pilgrimage to the shrine, a grotto where an illiterate peasant girl, St. Bernadette, said she had visions of the Virgin Mary in 1858.

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Science & Technology



Life & Style

Here comes the bride, so look out

By CAMILLA A. HERRERA
THE STAMFORD ADVOCATE

Bridezilla (brid zil/a) *n.* a bride who is greedy, thoughtless and rude, thinks nothing of etiquette and believes her friends and family should cater to all of her desires, no matter how outrageous.

IN ACTION

□ A woman is asked to be a matron of honor for her best friend's wedding. After buying an expensive gown and shoes, and organizing a bridal shower, the bride tells her that she is too fat and can no longer be part of the bridal party.

□ A bridal registry department store clerk recalls a bride who asked to insert a note in her registry that read, "The china costs \$90 for each place setting. If you are unable to give us at least one full place setting, then please don't give us anything." The note was left out.

of bad behavior, says Dunson. But many family members and friends excuse it to give brides a lifelong Cinderella dream, if only for a day. "They are going to be in the spotlight, so they want to control how they look," she says.

Problems begin when brides want to control how everyone else looks, down to the shade of lipstick, length of hair, color of toenail polish, height of a heel and glow of a fake tan.

"I knew a bride that bought two wedding dresses and had her portraits taken in both," says Dunson. "The portraits are scattered around the entryway of the church. She even had photo magnets made up herself."

"We called it 'The Purple Wedding.' Everything was purple, including the groomsmen, their boutonnieres. The bridesmaids had purple beads instead of flowers. The punch was purple. Instead of rice, they pulled the purple Goldfish out of the snack bags and threw those on the couple. I thoroughly expected to see Barney come down the aisle singing, 'I Love You.'" Stories inevitably include warnings.

Beware of bridezilla if a deposit slip or registry card is included in a wedding invitation, or a padlocked cash box is prominently displayed at a bridal shower or reception with signs welcoming contributions.

There is a bridezilla on the premises if she announces the monetary value of a gift, treats her bridal party like dress-up dolls or discusses her wedding plans ad nauseum.

"There was a bride who arrived at her own wedding one hour late, inconveniencing 200 people," says Loretta Stagen of Loretta Stagen Floral Designs in Stamford, Conn. "The church was not air-conditioned and she was having her hair done. I went to pick up the flowers after the ceremony was supposed to have been over and it hadn't started yet." Stagen recalls discussing floral options with the same bride. "She insisted she was going to learn the names of all the flowers, wanted to measure the length of the stems and compare swatches to be sure the colors were identical," she says.

Robert Norman, a Norwalk, Conn., event photographer, thinks momzilla is part of the problem.

"I met with a mom and her daughter, and it was hard to differentiate who was getting married," he writes in an e-mail. "The mom



Just two of the countless true tales described in "Bridezilla: True Tales From Etiquette Hell" (Salado Press, \$14.95) by Gail Dunson, an etiquette expert and wedding planner, and Jeanne Hamilton, creator of www.etiquettehell.com, the Web site from which many of the book's stories are drawn.

"A wedding can bring out the best in a person, but unfortunately it can also bring out the worst in some," says Dunson, whose pen name is Noe Spaemme. "She is a control freak. She has to nitpick every detail to the point where she has few friends left and forgets to have a good time." Bridezilla has yet to make it into a dictionary, but she is well-recognized. Mention her and many laugh and volunteer a tale. A Google search lists more than 11,000 entries, filled with loads of anecdotal evidence.

These anecdotes can serve as examples

See **HERE** on Page 36

CUC 0018

CUC 0018

Ashlee Simpson out of sister's shadow

By COLLEEN LONG
AP WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Ashlee Simpson doesn't have to worry about being in the shadow of her older sister Jessica anymore. The 19-year-old's debut album "Autobiography" is No. 1 and probably will hit platinum this week. Jessica, 23, has never had an album reach No. 1, though her latest, "In This Skin," has sold more 2 million copies.

Both sisters have popular reality shows on MTV, and they air back to back.

But both insist they aren't competitive.

"We're sisters," Ashlee Simpson gushes. "For us it's not about competition. If she

succeeds, then I'm happy, and if I succeed, then our family wins no matter what."

Dad Joe Simpson manages both daughter's careers, and suggested the reality show for Ashlee, who spent two years as a supporting character on the WB's TV series "Seventh Heaven" and recorded a song for the film "Freaky Friday."

"I wasn't that wild about having the cameras in my face, but my dad thought it would be a good way for everyone to get to know me as me, and not as Jessica's little sister," Ashlee says.

The reality show deals mostly with making the album, her struggles writing songs and working with different producers, as well as the everyday teenage drama

of boyfriends and breakups.

"There's no question that it really helped expose her and her music," Geffen Records President Jordan Schur says. "She's got a tremendous personality; people gravitate toward that. They want to watch her and listen to her music."

Simpson and Schur scrapped a couple of times on the show, because she feared he wanted her to sound too much like Hilary Duff. In one episode, Geffen records executives say she needs to sound "nicer." Schur didn't like her first demo tapes and forced her to work with new producers.

"I don't know how else to say it, but that's just not me," she says of the bubble gum pop style of Duff. "I think it's great, but I'm just drawn to different stuff."

Critics say "Autobiography" still ends up sounding more like pop than rock, and has gotten mixed reviews. Still, they say, it's catchy and Ashlee Simpson does achieve a sound different from her sister's.

"Teenagers who know less about rock 'n' roll than Ashlee Simpson are the ones buying her album," says Jenny Elsiu, an associate editor at Rolling Stone magazine. "If they are told 'Here, she's rock,' then they'll believe it."

"There's an immediate marketing angle for Ashlee that didn't exist for Jessica, which is that she's the punkier sister, the hip sister. It's a clever position her dad put her in."

Simpson said her dyed brown hair and punkier ways are not a marketing ploy.



AP
Singer Ashlee Simpson arrives at a party celebrating the release of her debut album, "Autobiography," on July 23, 2004 in Hollywood, Calif.

"I'm not going to not do music just because my sister sings. The Jacksons did it. It runs in your genes," she says. "Our personalities are so different it reflects in our music."

For example, when she was in junior high school, she wanted to go to Alanis Morissette's concert but her mother wouldn't let her because of the expletives in the song "You Oughta Know."

"So I kept saying (expletive) to make her mad and I got my mouth washed out with soap," she giggles. "But my parents really weren't that strict. They know I'd go off the wall if they were."

Jessica would never have done that, she insists.

Ashlee realizes that she had it easier than others when trying to get a record deal. "I feel incredibly lucky, I don't think I deserve this at all," she says.

Still, she says she has worked hard and there have been struggles—but Jessica isn't worried about Ashlee.

"Ashlee doesn't need any advice, and Ashlee is very much an observer," Jessica Simpson says. "She sees decisions that I've made that are good, and decisions I've made that are bad. She's definitely well set up."

The sisters aren't planning to perform together any time soon. For now Ashlee is planning to tour with her band and enjoy the success of her new album first.

And once they do sing together, Ashlee wants them "to do something different for both of us. Maybe blues or something where we can both step out of our styles."

Jackson lawyer scrutinizes psychologist

By LINDA DEUTSCH
AP SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SANTA MARIA, Calif. (AP)—The psychologist who notified police of a 12-year-old boy's claims of being molested by pop singer Michael Jackson had patients on both sides of the case, a defense lawyer indicated in court Tuesday.

Besides his ties to the child, the psychologist had as a patient an investigator who once worked for one of Jackson's attorneys, the lawyer said.

Psychologist Stan J. Katz declined to discuss his relationship with private investigator Bradley Miller, claiming doctor-patient confidentiality.

Defense attorney Brian Oxman persisted: "Bradley Miller

is a very special patient of yours, is he not, Dr. Katz?"

"If he were a patient, I could not disclose that because of the privilege," Katz replied.

Superior Court Judge Rodney Melville accepted that assertion, but Oxman again questioned Katz about Miller. The judge ruled the therapist could not be forced to answer and ordered the lawyer to drop the subject.

After a number of additional questions in which Oxman referred to Miller as Katz's "patient" or "client," the judge interrupted and fined the lawyer \$1,000.

In raising the issue, the defense was seeking to show that the psychologist likely knew that the investigator worked for Jackson attorney Mark Geragos—and probably told authorities.

The defense is trying to convince a judge that evidence seized during a search of the investigator's office should be barred from Jackson's trial. If authorities knew of the investigator's link to Geragos, the search violated the attorney-client privilege, the defense contends.

Authorities—including Santa Barbara County District Attorney Tom Sneddon, who conducted surveillance at the office—deny they were aware of any link between the investigator and Geragos.

Jackson, 45, is charged with committing a lewd act upon a child, administering an intoxicating agent and conspiring to commit child abduction, false imprisonment and extortion. He has pleaded not guilty and is

free on \$3 million bail.

Later Tuesday, the judge ruled against a defense effort to attack the validity of a police search of Jackson's Neverland Ranch.

"There was probable cause to believe that Michael Jackson had committed the offenses based on the statements of the minor witness," the judge said, adding that that was sufficient reason for authorities to enter Neverland and search computers and written documents for information.

The judge did allow the defense to go ahead with a challenge of specific areas of the search, granting a one-day break in the proceedings for Jackson's lawyers to compile a list of all evidence they believe should be suppressed. The hearing resumes Thursday.

wallace

HERE

From Page 35

kept talking about what she wanted. The daughter smiled politely and said, 'My mother has some very specific things she wants.' I joked and asked who was getting married, and the mom said, 'We both are.' I thought that was very telling.

"I just think, in some cases, the mothers want to relive

something either they didn't have or wish they had. They obviously want to make it better for their child, but when they take over and answer for the bride, I think it gets a little weird. I guess what's stranger is that the bride would allow that to happen."

Disasters are plenty. No bride, after all, should be expected to handle an exploding septic system, a malfunctioning camera,

sunburn or food poisoning. But it is how a bride handles calamities that distinguishes her from a bridezilla.

"I went to another wedding where there was a huge thunderstorm and the power went off," says Dunson. "The church was kind of dark. The bride's waiting to go in, but there is no organ music. Someone starts humming 'Here Comes the

Bride.' Everyone joins and she came down the aisle.

"The reception was outdoors; it was so muddy," she continues. "The bride didn't want to get her dress muddy so she went inside, changed into jeans and joined the party." Norman believes brides should be given some flexibility. After all, some meltdowns can easily be attributed to the normal stress of wedding planning.

Nick Lachey to star in 'Charmed'



Singer Nick Lachey arrives to the Dessert Beauty Launch Party hosted by Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey, held at Marquee, in this April 23, 2004 file photo in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—He had a crush on her, but Alyssa Milano doesn't mind—she thinks "he's hot." Nick Lachey told "Access Hollywood" in a recent interview that he had to tell his "Charmed" co-star about his former crush to avoid the humiliation of having her find out from someone else.

Lachey plays Milano's love interest in an upcoming six-episode arc on the WB show.

"The first day I came I said, 'I'm just going ... to tell you right now that your poster was hanging in my locker. Because you're going to hear about it and I don't want to be embarrassed later on.'"

Milano says the feeling is mutual.

"His eyes are like lavender," the 31-year-old actress told the syndicated entertainment TV show. "I can't even look at him when I'm working with him ... Yeah, he's hot."

The new season of "Charmed" premieres Sept. 12.

When Lachey was asked if his pop star wife, Jessica Simpson, would have a problem with his on-screen lip lock with Milano, the 30-year-old singer replied: "I'm in the clear here because when she did 'That '70s Show,' she had to kiss Ashton (Kutcher). They did like five takes of the scene, so I got a free pass on the kiss thing!"

Cruise says he's keeping vote private

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Tom Cruise says he respects the right of entertainers to participate in political campaigning, but his vote in the upcoming presidential election will remain private.

During a news conference in Mexico's capital Monday to promote the local release of "Collateral," Cruise was asked his preference when it comes to President Bush and Democratic nominee John Kerry.

"Politics is something that is very personal to me," Cruise said. "I am not going to comment

publicly (about) who I'm going to vote for. ... I don't want what I say to become a political football."

But when asked how he feels about other performers lobbying for their favorite candidate, Cruise signaled his approval.

"It's their right to do that and I respect that," said Cruise, appearing next to posters of the gray and grizzled hit man he plays in "Collateral."

"But I do believe and I encourage people to go out and study the issues, get beyond the propaganda," he said.

Man's ex won't fade away so he can focus on future

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I am in an uncomfortable spot. I met a great woman last month and have developed feelings for her. I'll call her Carmen.

Every time I try to focus my energy into starting this relationship, my ex, "Rita," pops back into the picture. Most recently, she was calling about a cell phone we had when we were together.

Carmen is aware that I got out of a 5 1/2-year relationship six months ago, but every time Rita does something to upset me, Carmen tells me she thinks I am not over Rita. Abby, I feel the relationship with my ex is over. I sincerely want to explore things with Carmen.

I have talked to Rita a few times to get everything squared away so there will be no more reasons for further contact, but something else always keeps coming up. I don't want Carmen to be scared off. What should I do?

READY TO MOVE ON IN DULUTH

DEAR READY: If you allow it, Rita will always find an excuse to maintain contact. It is time to put your past firmly behind you and move on. This means making a clean break with Rita. Tell her that communicating with her is causing problems for you, so you won't be doing it anymore. Then keep your word—no phone calls, no e-mails, no visits.

DEAR ABBY: In the past, survivors drawing Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs because their spouse died from a service-connected cause, lost this benefit if they remarried.

Effective Dec. 16, 2003, qualifying spouses who remarry after age 57 retain the DIC benefit. Those who remarried after age 57 but before the new law took effect can have their DIC benefit restored—but only if they apply for DIC reinstatement by Dec. 15, 2004.

To apply, these surviving spouses should submit a written request for restoration of DIC along with a statement of dependence (VA form 21-686c). The form is available on the Web at www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/21-686c.pdf. Applications should be mailed to the nearest regional VA office. To find the nearest office, go to www.va.gov and click on Facility Locator.

VICE ADM. NORBERT R. RYAN JR., USN (RET.),
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

DEAR ADM. RYAN: Thanks for this important alert, which could mean a significant amount of money—\$967 or more a month—for some people who could really use it. So, readers, if you know any widows or widowers who lost their spouse because of a service-related cause, and who might have missed reading today's column, please be an angel and call this to his or her attention. If the VA receives the application later than Dec. 15, restoration of DIC benefits must be denied.

This one-year application period does NOT apply to other surviving spouses whose remarriage on or after reaching age 57 followed enactment of the law.

For more information, call: (800) 827-1000 or visit the nearest VA regional office, the location of which can be found in the blue pages of local telephone directories. People with hearing impairment should call: (800) 829-4833 using their TDD device.

Time is growing short, so don't procrastinate.

DEAR ABBY: I am one of your older readers—age 90—but I don't look a day over 70. I recently told my sister that I wear hip-huggers, and she asked me if I'm going senile. She thinks it's awful. I say hip-huggers are comfortable in the summer heat. What is your opinion?

"HIP" IN CASSELBERRY, FLA.

DEAR "HIP": I know women 30 years younger than you who are reluctant to bear their midriffs because their skin is no longer taut. However, since you are comfortable wearing hip-huggers, the choice should be yours and your sister should refrain from making any more catty comments. (Could she be jealous?)

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Firth film to open at Toronto Fest

TORONTO (AP)—"Trauma," a twisting flick starring Colin Firth, is one of several movies to open next month at the Toronto International Film Festival.

In the Marc Evans film, Firth awakens from a coma after a car crash to learn his wife was killed. Or was she?

Other films to make their world or North American premieres at the Sept. 9-18 festival include German director Hendrik Holzman's "Off Beat," about a melancholy young man who meets the woman who has been appearing in his dreams.

From the United States comes Michael Skolnick's "On the Outs," about a trio of Latino teens from New Jersey whose lives intersect in juvenile detention.

Pete Travis' British-Irish production "Omagh" examines the 1998 IRA bombing of the small Irish town.

Michael Winterbottom of Britain brings his "9 Songs," which alternates between live music performances and a London couple's explicit sexcapades.

In an exploration of digital filmmaking, the festival will screen Lynn Marie Kirby's "St. Ignatius Church Exposure: Lenten Light Conversions," an experiment in which 16mm film is manipulated through a film-to-digital transfer machine.

Organizers hope to schedule more than 300 films from 50 countries on 21 screens during the two-week event.

Paris Hilton's lost Chihuahua turns up

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Paris Hilton and her missing pet Chihuahua, Tinkerbell, have been reunited, Hilton's spokeswoman said Wednesday.

No further details were available, Gina Hoffman told The Associated Press.

Syndicated TV show "Extra" had earlier reported that Tinkerbell, who disappeared last Wednesday, was alive, but that no details on the dog's condition or where she had been found were available.

The 23-year-old hotel heiress, who has starred for two seasons on Fox television's "The Simple Life" with her friend Nicole Richie, had offered a \$5,000 reward for Tinkerbell.

Posters for the pampered pet had been displayed all over the West Hollywood area.

It was unclear how the dog managed to get away from Hilton's Hollywood Hills home.

Tinkerbell—decked out in pink coats or puppy-sized sneakers—has made regular appearances on Hilton's reality show.

Patty Duke gets Hollywood Fame Walk star

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anyone who grew up on "The Patty Duke Show" knows "Patty loves to rock and roll, a hot dog makes her lose control." And now they know that receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame makes the Oscar-winning actress tear up.

An emotional Duke hugged her sons, actors Sean and Mack-

Paris Hilton poses with her chihuahua "Tinker Bell" at the Tides Hotel on Miami Beach in this March 11, 2004 file photo.



enzie Astin, at her star's unveiling Tuesday in front of Hollywood's landmark Roosevelt Hotel. It was a ceremony Sean Astin called "well-deserved and long overdue."

Duke, already a Broadway star at 14, won a best supporting actress Oscar at 16 for portraying Hellen Keller in the film "The Miracle Worker." Eighteen years later, she won an Emmy for her

portrayal of Keller's teacher, Annie Sullivan, in the made-for-TV version of the movie.

She played identical teenage cousins Patty and Cathy Lane on the "The Patty Duke Show," which began each week with a theme song describing the two and noting, "Our Patty loves to rock and roll, a hot dog makes her lose control"

Winning gambler is peeved when her date wants half

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: If a gentleman asks a lady to accompany him to a casino and gives her money to gamble, is it proper for him to insist that she split her winnings with him? This happened to me recently.

Even before the \$1,000 credits were finished rolling, my date called out that it was a 50/50 split. Most of my friends felt it was highly inappropriate, and that I should have been entitled to my entire jackpot.

I would have preferred being given the chance to make up my own mind about whether I wished to share my winnings. My friends also pointed out that this man makes four times the money I do and should have been more generous.

Do you think my friends were right? At first I was just a little bit irritated. Now I feel taken advantage of.

SHORTCHANGED IN SACRAMENTO

DEAR SHORTCHANGED: Considering the fact that your date advanced the money that brought your windfall, I'd say you are 100 percent ahead of where you would be had he not been so generous. You may feel offended at his sense of entitlement, but a lady would have offered to share.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: I am a 33-year-old woman who has never been married. My boyfriend, "Mickey," recently proposed and I accepted. We're planning a small wedding in about four months. It's a first marriage for both of us.

I have two small dogs whom I adore. Their names are Melody and Harmony. Mickey insists that I get rid of one of them and that I am immature for wanting to keep both.

I explained that Melody and Harmony were around before he was, and I can't give up either one. He knew about them before we began dating.

They are not outdoor pets. I keep them very clean and do not see what the problem is. Melody and Harmony both have been through basic dog training and are well-behaved.

I am disturbed that, knowing how much I care for them, he would ask such a thing. We seem unable to reach an agreement about this. I love Mickey dearly and know he loves me, too. How can we resolve this?

BROKENHEARTED IN PEORIA, ARIZ.

DEAR BROKENHEARTED: What your fiance is suggesting is a very poor start for a marriage. If you cave in to these demands, you will never forgive yourself—and it will only be the beginning of what he will want you to sacrifice. My advice to you is to postpone the wedding until your fiance can find enough love in his heart for the three of you, because you are a package deal.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: Please tell people that when shaking hands, not to "squeeze" a person's hand hard. I have arthritis in my hands and it hurts so bad when some people shake my hand. Just a gentle shake is sufficient. Please print this.

SORE HAND IN PILGRIM, KY.

DEAR SORE: A person can shake your hand only if you extend it. The next time you're in a social situation and someone extends his or her hand—smile, reach out and touch the person on the upper arm and say, "I'd shake your hand, but I can't because I have arthritis."

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Dear Abby

Pastimes



Woods' top ranking on line at NEC Invitational

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP GOLF WRITER

AKRON, Ohio (AP)—Tiger Woods already lost out on the majors. Next up could be his No. 1 ranking.

The top candidate is Vijay Singh, who showed up at Firestone just 18 hours after winning the PGA Championship acting as if nothing had changed and he was ready to play the next tournament.

"You see some guys win and they have a little lull for a week, or they don't commit to the next week, or it's tiring for them to win," PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem said. "I saw him (Monday), and he's just ... he's just Vijay."

The next time Finchem sees him, he might be looking at the No. 1 player in the world.

Singh's playoff victory at Whistling Straits brought the 41-year-old Fijian to the brink of a goal not many thought possible two years ago.

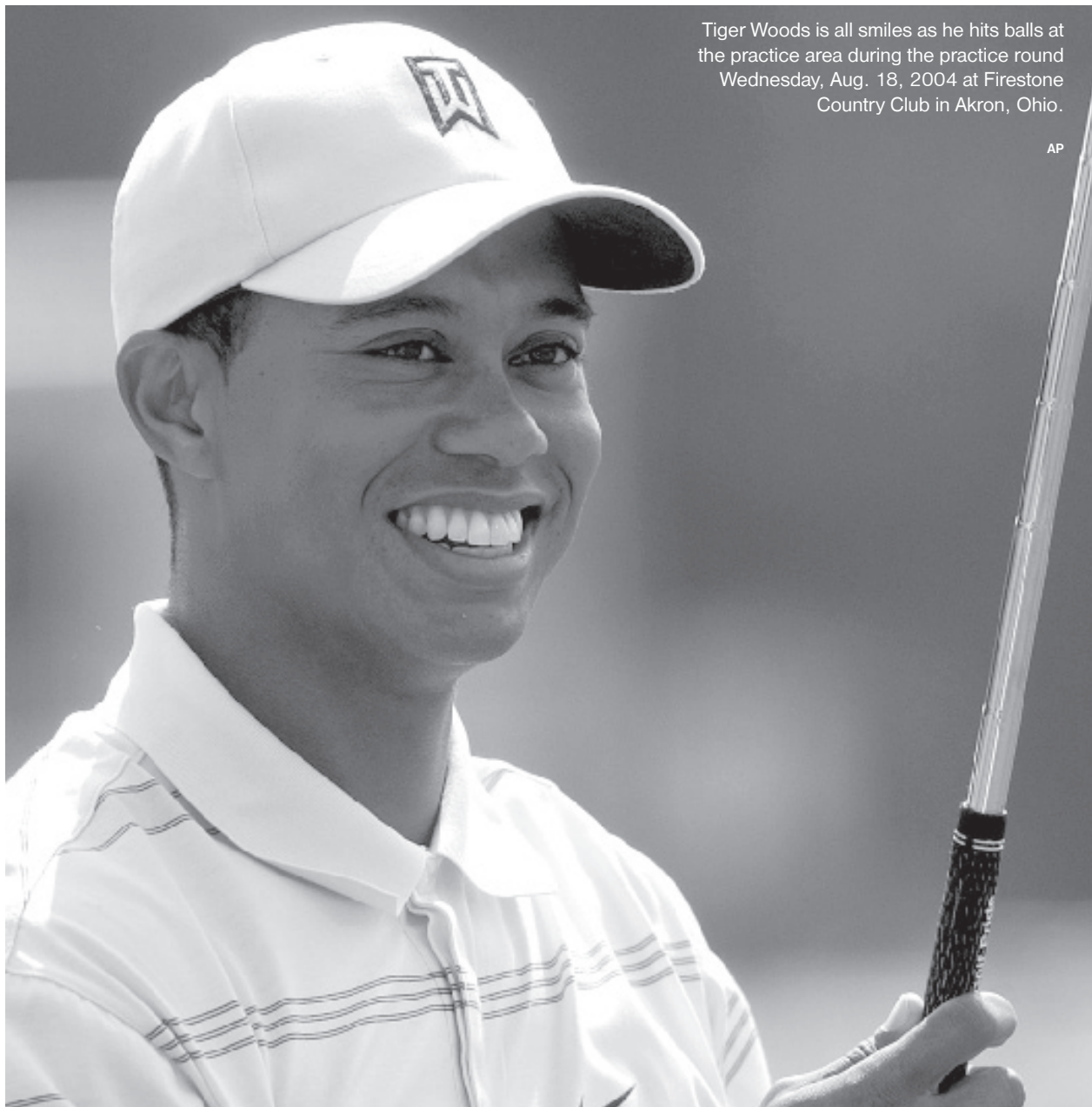
Having closed the gap to a mere one-tenth of a point, Singh needs only to finish ahead of Woods at the NEC Invitational to end Woods' record reign of 262 consecutive weeks atop the world ranking.

"I want to finish No. 1, and if I can do that, that would be great," Singh said. "That will be the ultimate goal for me - to win a major, win the money list and player of the year, and at the same time be No. 1 in the world. I'm very close, but my focus this week is this tournament."

"If I can pull this one off, then I'll probably take the rest of the year off."

Singh laughed, although everyone already knew he was kidding.

He loves to play tournament golf, so much that he thinks the world ranking system works against him. Singh already has won five times this year, compared with one victory for Woods. A year ago, Singh was a four-time winner and narrowly lost the PGA Tour



Tiger Woods is all smiles as he hits balls at the practice area during the practice round Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2004 at Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio.

AP

player of the year award to Woods and his five victories.

What counts is consistency, which is why Singh is so close to the top.

That is how Woods has stayed there for so long - a record 332 weeks since turning pro eight years ago, breaking the record Monday that Greg Norman (331

weeks) had set over a 12-year span.

Woods has been No. 1 for the last 262 weeks, dating to his victory in the 1999 PGA Championship.

And he is well aware that it could be gone over the course of four rounds on a Firestone South course that is playing longer and tougher than ever.

"As far as the No. 1 ranking, it's certainly a point of honor," Woods said Wednesday. "You've had to play hard and you've had to play well, and for me to have done it for as long as Greg has, I've been very consistent."

But it's not just consistency. Winning is a large part of the No.

Ravens leave door open for Deion to play

By **DAVID GINSBURG**
AP SPORTS WRITER



WESTMINSTER, Md. (AP)—The Baltimore Ravens are excited about the prospect of having Deion Sanders come out of retirement and be a part of their defensive backfield.

The question now is: Will he take them up on their offer?

The Ravens have told Sanders that if he wants to end his retirement of three years, he would be welcome to join the team. Sanders is working out at his Dallas home in an effort to determine if his 37-year-old body can take the punishment of playing in the NFL.

"He's obviously doing his due diligence to see if this is something he really wants to do," Ravens coach Brian Billick said Wednesday. "Certainly we'd love to have him in, and when we get to that point, he'll be in."

Ravens safety Corey Fuller, a good friend of Sanders, isn't so sure that Sanders is ready to put on a helmet and shoulder pads for the first time since 2000, when he was a member of the Washington Redskins. Sanders formally announced his retirement the day before the Redskins opened camp in 2001.

"I talk to him every day," Fuller said. "I know what he's going to do. The man said he's not coming. He's got four kids. It's not because he can't play anymore. It's just that the man has a lot going on outside of football."

But the Ravens are convinced that Sanders has yet to arrive at a final decision, and they're prepared to let him take his time in deciding if he wants to join the team.

"It's far enough along that when he feels he's ready, he's in," Billick said. "Deion is a professional. He doesn't want to come in here unless he's ready to go. We'll give him that kind of space, and when he feels he's physically at the right spot, then we'd love to have him."

Sanders made a name for himself at cornerback, a far more demanding position than where the Ravens would use him - as a fifth defensive back in passing situations. Therefore, Billick isn't worried about the possibility of Sanders perhaps being a step slower than when he was known as Prime Time.

"He's a special individual with special talents. He's not too old, I can promise you that," Billick said. "It will be a work in progress to a degree, but he's not too old. He's been out of it for

three years, which means he's fresh."

On that point, Fuller concurred. "Deion is in great shape. He has a gym in his house and works out all the time. But when you get older, it comes down to your mind," Fuller said. "When you've been off for three years, you get attached to other things."

Sanders, a former major league outfielder, worked out with the Texas Rangers prior to Wednesday night's game against the Cleveland Indians. He shagged flies in the outfield and took swings in the batting cage.

As he left the field, Sanders was evasive when asked about returning to the NFL.

"I'm here to talk about baseball," Sanders said. "Baseball questions only. I really miss baseball. I didn't know how much I missed it, being around the guys."

If Sanders wants to play for the Ravens, defensive coordinator Mike Nolan would happily draw up a game plan that would include him in the backfield.

"Adding depth is one thing, but adding quality depth is a whole different thing," Nolan said. "A player like that comes along, we'll do what fits that player. It will allow us to be more aggressive than we already are."

A player like that allows you to do just about anything."

Most of the Ravens are excited about the possibility, too.

"Deion brings excitement to the game," linebacker Adalius Thomas said. "I used to watch him as a kid, and now you get a chance to sit down with him and pick his brain. It will be very exciting when he does, uh, if he does come back."

Ravens wide receiver Kevin Johnson is excited about the prospect of running in practice against cornerback Chris McAlister, who is expected to arrive in camp next week, and Sanders, one of the finest defensive backs of the past 20 years.

"You figure, with him, Chris and Gary Baxter, you're going to get the best of both worlds," Johnson said. "You're going up against Chris, who's the best of his time right now, and Deion, one of the best of his time."

But the addition of Sanders could spell trouble for a player such as rookie cornerback Lance Frazier, who's striving to be part of the team.

"That would be another roster spot, right at the position that I'm playing," Frazier said. "That will get me either booted or put on practice squad."

1 ranking, which is why Woods is on the verge of losing it. His only victory this year was the Match Play Championship in February, and with only five tournaments left on his schedule, he most likely will end his streak of five consecutive years with at least five victories.

"Greg was No. 1 in the world for a long period of time and he was winning two to four a year, and I did the same thing," Woods said. "I did five-plus for five straight years, and now Vijay has won five times this year. That's how you do it. You don't get to No. 1 in the world by finishing top 10. You have to win."

And that's why Woods is holding out hope that No. 1 still belongs to him until someone takes it away.

His game has not been sharp all year, although Woods can't argue with the venue.

Firestone South has been one of his favorite tracks since he turned pro, never finishing lower than fifth in his six appearances and winning the NEC Invitational three straight times (1999-2001) in a variety of ways - by one shot, by 12 shots and in a seven-hole playoff against Jim Furyk for his only victory in the summer of '01.

"I think any time you come to an event where you've won before and you've had success, you automatically feel comfortable and confident, if your game is not up to form or if you're playing great," Woods said. "I've come in both ways into this tournament, and for some reason I've played well."

The NEC Invitational is for players on the Ryder Cup and Presidents Cup teams, the top 50 in the world ranking and winners of top tournaments around the world.

Knicks re-sign forward Baker



NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Knicks re-signed forward Vin Baker on Wednesday.

The 11-year veteran averaged 9.8 points and 5.2 rebounds in 54 games for the Knicks and Boston Celtics last season. He signed as a free agent in March, averaging 6.6 points and 4.1 rebounds in the final 17 games for the Knicks.

"Vin gave us a solid presence off the bench at the end of last season and in the playoffs," Knicks President Isiah Thomas said. "With a fresh start at training camp with the team, we know he'll be an even more productive force."

The 6-foot-11 Baker averaged 14.3 minutes in four playoff games, contributing 5.5 points and 3.0 rebounds in the Knicks' first-round loss to the New Jersey Nets.

Baker was the eighth overall pick by the Milwaukee Bucks in the 1993 draft and a four-time All-Star, but his battle with alcoholism led to his release by Boston.

Baker was shooting more than 50 percent for the Celtics before he was suspended—and subsequently had his contract terminated—for violating terms of his alcohol treatment program.

Woods aims to regain form at British Open

By **TIM DAHLBERG**
AP SPORTS COLUMNIST

TROON, Scotland (AP)—Tiger Woods has been hitting fairways this week, and his caddie, Steve Williams, hasn't been hitting anyone.

The British Open doesn't start until Thursday, of course, and things can change just as quickly as the quirky weather off the coast of west Scotland. Woods doesn't need to be reminded of that.

The last time the British Open was held in Scotland, he was not only an overwhelming favorite, but British bookies also fancied him to finish off the Grand Slam that year.

Incredibly, just two years later, he's not even the pick to win this week at Royal Troon. That honor would go to Ernie Els, who just a short time ago seemed baffled by the idea he could actually beat Woods when it really mattered.

Now, it seems, anyone—and that really means anyone—can beat Woods. Eight players have won major championships since he took the U.S. Open at Bethpage, N.Y., in 2002.

With each wayward drive, Woods sinks a little bit more toward mediocrity. The mystique is gone, and so is the intimidation other players used to feel every time he stuck a tee in the ground.

"Pure and simple, he can't drive the ball in the fairway," Nick Price said. "From all I've seen now the last five months, his off-the-tee game is so erratic, and there's no pattern to it because he's losing it right and left. Until such time as he starts getting the ball in the fairway, he's going to struggle.

"You have to be a great driver of the ball to win major championships."

Indeed you do, and Woods once was. Which, of course, brings us to the question of what Woods has been doing to become that great driver again.

Well, he's got a new driver for one, a big fat graphite shafted Nike that's just the type he once



Tiger Woods is seen during practice for the British Open at Royal Troon golf course in Troon, Scotland Wednesday July 14, 2004. The British Open is scheduled to start on Thursday July 15.

AP

scorned. He's longer than ever, but length has never been a problem for Woods.

Presumably he's been out practicing with it, though you might wonder where he's getting the time. He's got a fiancée and an increasing number of business interests and recreational pursuits away from golf.

Some of those are in Las Vegas, where Butch Harmon, his former swing guru, teaches. Woods' visits, though, have nothing to do with getting instruction from his estranged coach.

Last month he jetted there for a few days of gambling after finishing well off the pace at the U.S. Open. And just hours after he finished his final round at the Western Open near Chicago, he was spotted partying at a posh casino nightclub.

Coincidence? Maybe. Woods, like anyone else, has the right to blow off steam. He's certainly earned it after bearing the many responsibilities that came with being Tiger Woods over the last few years.

But Woods became great because of his singular focus on his golf game, as his father, Earl Woods, would be more than willing

to tell you. He became great by constant hours of practicing to come up with a short game as great as the shots he could seemingly manufacture at will off the tee.

Whether the same focus is still there is hard to figure out. Woods doesn't let anyone inside his private life, and he's not about to tell anyone what he's doing.

But if last month's U.S. Open is any indication, there are cracks in the armor. At Shinnecock Hills, Woods feuded publicly with Harmon even while his drives were going sideways, and he wasn't a factor on the weekend.

At the same time, his caddie became so annoyed at a photographer that he kicked his camera, then later went into the crowd and grabbed another one from an astonished spectator.

The boss doesn't like distractions, you know.

"I've always played my best when I've gone out and played—and stayed—focused on what I have to do and not worry about anything else," Woods said Tuesday.

Woods didn't say much else. He's become more taciturn than ever, insisting as always that everything is fine, while at the

same time refusing to be drawn into any specifics about his game or his swing.

Harmon speculated at the U.S. Open that his former student was in a "bit of denial" about everything, a statement that angered Woods mostly because it was made publicly.

Since then, Woods and Harmon have chatted and Woods said they patched up some of their differences. None of that chat concerned his golf swing, though, and Woods still stubbornly clings to the notion he can fix things himself.

Maybe he can. Maybe Woods knows something no one else knows and will find a way to do something he hasn't done since last October—win a stroke-play tournament.

Winning, of course, is the best way to quiet critics. If Woods can win his second British Open, people will quickly quit talking about his slump and return to talking about his chances of beating Jack Nicklaus' record of 18 major championship titles.

And maybe his caddie will get a clue and quit bullying people on his way around the course.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS		PHILADELPHIA EAGLES-Signed G Adrien Clarke to a four-year contract and LB Jeremiah Trotter to a one-year contract.
MLB HOUSTON ASTROS-Fired Jimmy Williams, manager; Burt Hooton, pitching coach; and Harry Spilman, hitting coach. Named Phil Garner manager, Jim Hickey pitching coach, and Gary Gaetti hitting coach.		Olympics U.S. OLYMPIC MEN'S ROAD CYCLING TEAM-Announced Levi Leipheimer will replace Lance Armstrong.
NBA ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Jason Collier. BOSTON CELTICS-Re-signed C Mark Blount to a six-year contract. CHARLOTTE BOBCATS-Signed G Jason Hart and F Tamar Slay. DALLAS MAVERICKS-Re-signed G Marquis Daniels to a five-year contract with a team option. DETROIT PISTONS-Signed F Antonio McDyess to a four-year contract with a team option and G-F Carlos Delfino to a three-year contract with a team option. GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS-Re-signed C Adonal Foyle to a six-year contract. LOS ANGELES CLIPPERS-Traded F-C Melvin Ely and G Eddie House to Charlotte for 2005 and 2006 second-round draft picks. LOS ANGELES LAKERS-Traded C Shaquille O'Neal to Miami for F Lamar Odom, F Caron Butler, F-C Brian Grant and a future first-round draft pick. MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES-Signed F Brian Cardinal to a six-year contract. MILWAUKEE BUCKS-Signed C Etan Thomas to a six-year offer sheet. PHILADELPHIA 76ERS-Signed F Brian Skinner to a multiyear contract. PHOENIX SUNS-Signed G Quentin Richardson to a six-year offer sheet. Signed G Steve Nash to a six-year contract. SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Re-signed F Bruce Bowen. Signed G Beno Udrih. TORONTO RAPTORS-Signed G Rafer Alston to a five-year contract. UTAH JAZZ-Signed F Carlos Boozer and C Mehmet Okur to six-year offer sheets. Re-signed G Carlos Arroyo to a four-year contract.		College AUBURN-Named Casey Dunn assistant baseball coach. DARTMOUTH-Named Maribel Sanchez Souther women's cross country coach. EVERGREEN STATE-Named Kim Farnsworth athletic trainer. HOUSTON-Named John Severance women's tennis coach. N.J. CITY-Named Bridgette Quimpo softball coach. NORTH DAKOTA STATE-Named Eric Viney women's assistant volleyball coach. NORTHWESTERN-Announced men's junior basketball F Bernard Cote will transfer from Kentucky. OKLAHOMA-Named Bill Pink director of women's basketball operations. PALM BEACH ATLANTIC-Announced the resignation of Chris Bizol, men's and women's tennis coach, to take a position with Texas-Tyler. RHODE ISLAND-Announced the resignation of Boe Pearman, women's basketball coach. SANTA CLARA-Named M. Felipe Montoro assistant cross country coach and Steve Drake women's assistant basketball coach. SETON HALL-Named Gerson Echeverry men's assistant soccer coach. SKIDMORE-Named Darren Bennett women's basketball coach. ST. FRANCIS, PA.-Named Wylie Crisanti women's lacrosse coach. TULSA-Named Christy Connoyer softball coach. WRIGHT STATE-Named Rob Cooper baseball coach.
NFL GREEN BAY PACKERS-Voided the trade of DE Jamal Reynolds to Indianapolis after Reynolds failed his physical and waived him. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS-Released S Jason Perry.		

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

RESTAURANT LEAGUE STANDINGS		
Angel Wings	3	0
Country House	3	1
Jollibee	3	1
Capricciosa	2	1
Keeraku	1	2
LSG Sky Chefs	0	3
El Segundo	0	4

Armstrong, UConn pair win ESPY Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong was a repeat winner as male athlete of the year, and Connecticut basketball stars Diana Taurasi and Emeka Okafor were also honored Wednesday night at the 12th annual ESPY Awards.

Armstrong is currently attempting to win the Tour de France for the sixth straight time.

Taurasi won the best college female athlete for the second straight year as well as the best female athlete, while Okafor was chosen the best male college athlete. The two led their respective teams to NCAA championships last spring.

For the first time, fans determined the winners in all 36 categories, including the

19 cross-cutter honors that pit athletes from different sports against each other. More than 10 1/2 million votes were cast between June 21 and July 9.

Armstrong was honored as the best male athlete over home run king Barry Bonds, quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, and NBA star Kevin Garnett.

Taurasi was selected over golfer Annika Sorenstam and tennis star Justine Henin-Hardenne in the female athlete of the year category.

The Detroit Pistons, who beat the Los Angeles Lakers in last month's NBA Finals, were picked as the best team over the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots, World Series-winning Florida Marlins, Stanley

Cup champion Tampa Bay Lightning and the UConn men's and women's basketball teams.

Detroit's Larry Brown won the best coach/manager award, and the Pistons were the winners in the new best upset category.

Among other winners were Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James, best breakthrough athlete; Masters champion Phil Mickelson, best male golfer and top championship performance; Manning, best NFL player; Garnett, best NBA player; Lauren Jackson, best WNBA player, Antonio Tarver, best boxer; Stewart Elliott, best jockey; Andy Roddick, best male tennis player, Gail Devers, female track and field, and Serena Williams, best female tennis player.

Golfer Tiger Woods, a winner of a record 15 ESPY awards, didn't win one for the first time since 1999. Bonds and Sorenstam rank second all-time with six such awards. Bonds won as best baseball player and Sorenstam as best female golfer.

George Weah, best known for his achievements on the soccer field, received the Arthur Ashe Courage Award for his humanitarian efforts in his war ravaged homeland of Liberia and other African countries.

The Ashe award is traditionally given to an athlete whose contributions transcend sports.

The ceremony was held at the Kodak Theater and will be televised Sunday by ESPN at 9 p.m. (EDT).

Prosecutor asks to retry Jayson Williams

FLEMINGTON, N.J. (AP)—The prosecutor in the Jayson Williams manslaughter case wants to retry the former NBA star in Hunterdon County.

In papers filed with the trial judge on Wednesday, First Assistant Hunterdon County Prosecutor Steven Lember argued that the retrial should be moved to Hunterdon County, where limousine driver Costas Christofi was killed by a blast from a shotgun handled by Williams.

"Just as the perceived existence of pretrial publicity led the court to change venue to Somerset County, the even-more extensive trial publicity in Somerset County necessitates a return to Hunterdon County," Lember wrote.

Superior Court Judge Edward Coleman moved the first trial to Somerset County because of extensive pretrial publicity.

The 36-year-old Williams was acquitted in April of ag-

gravated manslaughter, aggravated assault and possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, but was convicted on four counts related to his efforts to cover up the shooting.

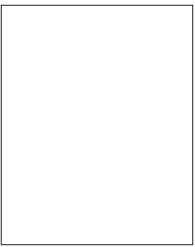
The jury deadlocked on the remaining reckless manslaughter count and a mistrial was declared. Lember decided to retry the case on that one charge.

The retrial is scheduled to start Jan. 10 in Somerville.

Christofi died in 2002 in Williams' Alexandria Township mansion.

If the judge denies Lember's request for a change of venue, the prosecutor has asked that a jury be brought in from a neighboring county with demographics similar to Hunterdon.

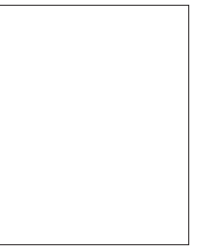
Lember will ask Coleman to reconsider his decision not to allow testimony about Williams' prior gun use, including the alleged shooting of his dog.



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